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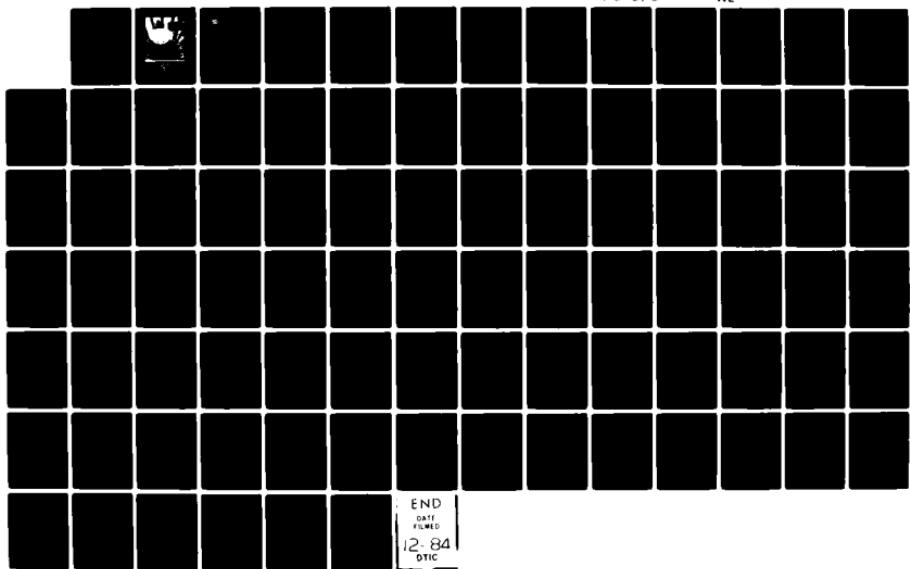
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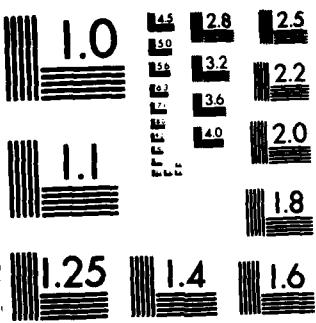
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**PRESERVING
THE LAMBENT FLAME:
TRADITIONAL VALUES
AND
THE USAF OFFICER
ACCESSION PROGRAM**

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Research Report No. AU-ARI-83-8

PRESERVING THE LAMBENT FLAME: TRADITIONAL VALUES AND THE USAF OFFICER ACCESSION PROGRAM

by

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For Master Sergeant
Richard Wallace Stokes,
USAFT, Retired,
who taught me what an officer ought to be

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FOREWORD

Nearly every Air Force officer above the rank of major, when questioned about perceptions of quality in today's younger and newer officers, expresses some degree of concern for the declining regard for officership and prestige of the officer corps. Unfortunately, that concern is difficult to support in terms of specific evidence—it seems to be a visceral perception.

This study examines that perception, identifies the accuracy of the concerns, and postulates the reasons why they exist. The author, Major Bud Stokes, has identified the major influences on the Air Force officer corps today as well as templating the ethos of Air Force officership. He then overlays this analysis on the means and methods we are using to recruit and commission new officers. From this, he projects the effect of those programs on the future character of the Air Force officer corps. His study asks some penetrating questions about the direction we are taking in our accession programs and suggests changes he deems necessary to preserve our traditional concepts of officership. The character of the Air Force officer corps has been in transition since 1916 when the First Aero Squadron flew its first combat sortie against Pancho Villa. It is important that we identify and preserve those traditional values that have served us so well in the past so that we may weather the changes of the uncertain future with a clear sense of identity and purpose.

The target population for this study extends far beyond that small group involved in officer training. It speaks directly to all Air Force officers who are concerned about the future of the corps. Bud Stokes' concerns should be the concerns of us all.



DONALD D. STEVENS, Colonel, USAF
Vice Commander
Center for Aerospace Doctrine,
Research, and Education

THE AUTHOR

Major Richard W. Stokes, Jr., completed this study while assigned to the Airpower Research Institute, Maxwell AFB, Alabama.

Major Stokes is a graduate of The Citadel with a BA in English Literature. He received his commission through the Air Force ROTC program in 1968. Following completion of pilot training in 1969, he was assigned to Pope AFB, North Carolina, as a C-130 pilot. He subsequently completed assignments in the C-130 at Ching Chuan Kang AB, Taiwan; Kadena AB, Japan; and Little Rock AFB, Arkansas.

Major Stokes completed a one-year assignment to Headquarters USAF/XO under the Air Staff Training (ASTRA) program in January 1977. His next tour was as an airlift operations officer at Headquarters Military Airlift Command, Scott AFB, Illinois.

In December 1978 Major Stokes was assigned to Laughlin AFB, Texas, as an instructor pilot in the T-37 aircraft. He later served as a flight commander, section commander, student branch chief, and wing executive officer/inspector general for the 47 Flying Training Wing at Laughlin.

Major Stokes was assigned to Maxwell AFB, Alabama, in 1981 as executive officer, and, later, chief of staff, Headquarters Air Force ROTC. In 1982 he was selected as a research fellow to the Airpower Research Institute at Maxwell.

A senior pilot with over 3,500 flying hours, Major Stokes' decorations include the Meritorious Service Medal with one oak leaf cluster, the Air Medal, and the Air Force Commendation Medal with two oak leaf clusters. He has completed Squadron Officer School, Marine Corps Command and Staff College, and is a 1983 graduate of the Air Command and Staff College. He has been selected for promotion to lieutenant colonel.

He is married to the former Analyn Allen of Del Rio, Texas. They have two daughters, Alyson and Anjanette.

PREFACE

One of the great benefits of the Airpower Research Institute (ARI) is what Colonel Ken Alnwick, the former director, has identified as "serendipity"—the gift of things not sought. In this case, the gift is the shared experience, expertise, knowledge, and advice of some very bright and dedicated officers temporarily united at ARI while each pursued projects of his own. We all gained from that serendipity, as well as from the opportunity to interface with the numerous visitors to ARI, including congressmen, senior defense and Air Force officials, academics, defense experts and consultants, and others. Regardless of the success or relative worth of this project, I have personally gained immeasurably from the experience and I thank ARI for the opportunity.

I am indebted to General Thomas M. Ryan, former commander of Air Training Command, for sending me to ARI and providing his total support to both the ARI program and this project. I also thank Colonel Alnwick for his advice, counsel, and encouragement. He was the right man for the job of getting ARI on its feet. Thanks, too, to Lieutenant Colonel Don Baucom for getting me started on track, Lieutenant Colonel Denny Drew for keeping me there, and to my editor, Mr. Tom Mackin, for helping me to say what I was trying to say.

Finally, thanks to my wife, Analyn, for keeping the faith.



RICHARD W. STOKES, JR., Major, USAF
Research Fellow
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INTRODUCTION

This study began as an organizational assessment of the Air Force precommissioning education function. It was spawned by the expressed interest and concern of several Air Training Command senior officers over an apparent decline in the quality of new Air Force officers. During the preliminary research, it appeared that quality could be enhanced by a streamlined alignment of the officer production agencies and management functions.

However, as the research continued, it became apparent that the organizational issue addressed only the form, not the content. If quality was an issue to be addressed, then it must be addressed in the content of the accessions process—the means through which we recruit, screen, and socialize officer candidates—not in the structures through which the accession process is accomplished. More fundamentally, the issue must be addressed in the definition of quality itself.

As a result, the thrust of this study became two fold: first, to determine if the concern for quality was founded in fact; and second, to address the means to correct or alter the officer production system in order to bolster the aspects of quality found wanting.

The research found significant indicators to justify the internal uneasiness over quality in new officers. This justification appears to stem from an emerging preoccupation of the Air Force with meeting the occupational specialist requirements of the various Air Force functions without a concurrent concern for the preservation of the officer-first, specialist-second ethic. Although this seems to be a recent phenomenon, the trends since the late 1970s reflect a growing awareness of the hazards of occupationalism to the officer corps and the beginning of a return to an insistence on a professional ethic.

The research did not reveal any indications that this diversion of emphasis toward officership and professionalism was intentional or deliberate. The officers and enlisted people involved in every aspect of accessions, from personnel planning to recruiting to precommissioning education, are sincerely striving to meet the needs and expressed desires of the organization. Their dilemma is that the requirements stated are divergent and conflictive—meeting one priority, in many cases, is counterproductive to another priority. The specialist requirements have only recently become demanding and specific to the degree that the Air Force can no longer ignore the conflicting priorities that they create.

This study does not presume to present ultimate solutions. The recommendations are not unique or revolutionary. What I have tried to do is to illuminate the situations and to offer suggested methods to devise solutions. By necessity, this study addresses only the precommissioning aspects of officer quality. The author recognizes that this initial aspect is only the beginning of the

officer quality process. The socialization of an officer continues throughout his or her career, and no initial program—however perfect—can serve as more than the beginning. Whether the suggestions are adopted is less important than a heightened awareness of the need to refine our priorities related to officer quality. If the study crystalizes the individual concern of the reader for officership issues, then it will be successful even if that crystallization is in the form of rebuttal.

CHAPTER 1

THE OFFICER CORPS IN TRANSITION

This study deals with the impact of current officer production programs and accession practices on the present and future quality of the United States Air Force officer corps. The term "officer quality" is obviously subjective. It elicits varied responses depending upon multiple factors from the framework of the discussion to the individuals involved. Furthermore, the fact that "officer quality" is the subject suggests some deficiency in the officer corps—not necessarily a valid conclusion. For example, the Air Force Deputy Chief of Staff for personnel has stated that we are recruiting and commissioning the highest quality officer entrant in Air Force history.¹ By current criteria, one cannot argue with this assessment, but certain actions of other senior officials indicate that the opposite is true. One basic objective of this study is to examine both sides of this issue. More importantly, either conclusion depends upon the criteria used to measure "quality"—and that definition is the crux of the issue. The primary purpose of this document is to examine the various definitions of officer quality by reviewing the manner in which those definitions are used in the systems through which the US Air Force recruits, screens, and educates officer candidates. This examination should allow us to project the impact of the current accession system on the future Air Force officer corps.

Scope

This monograph examines the definition of officer quality as applied in the officer accession structures: recruiting, screening, and commissioning education. Primarily, it addresses line officer accessions (all officer sources except Judge Advocate General Corps, Medical and Medical Service Corps, Chaplains Corps, and other direct commissioning processes) except for reserve recall. However, some aspects of these direct commissioning programs are addressed where specific consideration of officer quality is appropriate.

A Corps in Transition

For multiple reasons, the officer corps of the US Air Force is experiencing changes to a greater extent than should be expected from the normal rotation of people. Furthermore, the rate of changes is more rapid than ever experienced in the US military, even those resulting from such significant weapons developments as the tank, submarine, and airplane, or our participation in two world wars. The major reasons for this accelerated rate of change include, but are certainly not limited to, the changing values of American society, the internal and external aftereffects of the Vietnam War, the advent of the all volunteer force (AVF), and finally, but certainly most significantly, the rapid and large-scale advancements in weapons technology. There are any number of additional factors which, at any given time, may be responsible for shifts in attitude or policy with regard to the officer corps, but the four above are the most frequently cited by both military and civilian experts as affecting all aspects of the American military. Let us briefly review each and its impact on the US Air Force officer corps.

Changing Social Values

Since the end of World War II, American society has been significantly altered by the economic and technological superiority of the country as a whole. While the world economy has vacillated, America has been the last to suffer and the first to recover. This ability, and the general standard of American life, encourages and nurtures an egocentric tendency throughout our society. Since World War II, the US legislative and judicial systems have responded to society's demand for more emphasis on individual rights, prerogatives, and privacy through federal legislation and constitutional interpretation. Since it refutes the authority of institutions over individuals, this shift has obvious implications for the military. The stress on individual rights may be appropriate and necessary for civilian society, but it has the potential to undermine cohesiveness in the military. In the past, military duty has implied forfeiture of some aspects of individual freedom. Furthermore, society has traditionally expected the military to adhere to a higher standard of behavior and ethics than the general public. This expectation has mandated that military officers become involved, to a certain degree, in their subordinates' private lives as well as their duty performance.

Professions require different obligations and responsibilities from their members than one finds in the society at large. Some of these obligations require that certain values, rights, and privileges of the civil society not be allowed free reign [sic] within the profession itself. The choice is a simple one: either to separate the profession from the larger society on the grounds that it must remain a profession with special obligations, or to dilute that sense of professionalism and turn the military into one more civilian occupation totally congruent with larger social values, values based upon the pursuit of self-interest and antithetical to notions of service and self-sacrifice.²

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As officers, we can either ignore this choice and continue to enforce traditional standards on our subordinates or avoid confrontation on the issue and deal only with those aspects of our subordinates' performance which occur or relate to "on-duty" actions. It is increasingly evident that we have opted, at least tacitly, for the latter.

Aftereffects of Vietnam

The tarnished image created by the Vietnam War will haunt the military establishment for some time. Although substantial restoration of public faith in the military has occurred since 1973, serious aftereffects remain. The most obvious appears to be a permanent erosion of public support for the military. In the public eye, the military bore the brunt of responsibility for our participation and was therefore worthy of the brunt of society's anguish. Regard for the military sank to an all-time low. The media's treatment of the military served to intensify the portrayal of the military as villains responsible for our Southeast Asia involvement; a cross we still bear.³ One almost immediate and visible effect on officer recruitment was the drop in Air Force Reserve Officer Training Corps (AFROTC) enrollment. Under the provisions of the ROTC Vitalization Act of 1964, the requirement for students attending land-grant institutions to attend ROTC was eliminated. The result on AFROTC enrollment, for example, was to drop from 101,617 in 1964 to 37,371 by 1969, the first year in which *none* of the students on campus were required to take ROTC at any time during their matriculation.⁴ This is not surprising, since college campuses traditionally have been the vanguard of social reform. They were the origins and heart of the antiwar and antimilitary movements of the sixties and seventies. The academic elite appear to be no more sympathetic towards defense issues than before. The growing antinuclear movement in these institutions is clear evidence of the survival of that sentiment.

In another sense, the effects of Vietnam are not limited to the attitudes and perceptions brought into the Air Force by those who entered during the war period. Vietnam has had a profound effect on the fundamental self-confidence of the officer corps. Since the latter stages of the conflict, and especially since the end of that war, the military has undergone an exhaustive self-examination to identify and excise the professional malignancies manifested in all branches of the services. Richard Gabriel and Paul Savage, in *Crisis in Command*, do an excellent job of identifying both the causes and effects of the decline in leadership effectiveness in the US Army.⁵ Most published works, including *Crisis in Command*, deal with problems in the Army, but it is both reasonable and prudent to assume that similar problems also exist to some degree in the Air Force. We have both drawn our officers from the same manpower pool and, to a

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large degree, maintained the same process for developing leaders. The point here is not to isolate on the specific problems but rather to emphasize that we have shown, in effect, serious concern over our collective abilities to perform our mission due to perceived quality declines.

Advent of the AVF

The termination of the draft and subsequent implementation of the all volunteer force (AVF) concept was but another indication of the American public's rejection of the military as a result of the Vietnam War. It was a rather clear signal that Americans, at least for contemporary time, no longer perceive any significant obligation toward the military. As an AVF, the military services have been forced to compete with every other employer for manpower. This "econometric" approach to recruiting, as Moskos calls it, has further perpetuated the shift in public regard for the role of the military in American society.⁶ In such a marketplace environment, the employer with the most lucrative offer will prevail. Very simply, a substantial segment of the public no longer regards military service as the price they must pay personally and individually for the preservation of our democratic society; but rather they consider the military to have an obligation to the commissionee/enlistee in return for voluntary service—in this case, occupational training. The economic recession today permits recruiting successes which obscure full appreciation of this attitude, but that is a temporary situation. A more complete discussion of the AVF impact on officer recruiting and screening appears in Chapter 3.

Weapons Technology Advancement

Finally, but surely most significantly, technological advancements and weapons development have brought about major changes in the officer corps complexion. This is most evident in our recruiting strategy for accessions in the Air Force. From the early Air Force days of the late forties through the late sixties, our expressed intent was to commission officers with broad-based liberal arts educations to become generalists.⁷ The specific requirements for technical expertise to support increased technical sophistication has apparently obviated that practice.

It is noteworthy that both the early Air Force intent to recruit generalists and the recent evolution to specialists appear to be reactions to the increasing complexity of aerial warfare rather than a result of planning or foresight. The "educated-generalist" requirement was a reaction to the advent of the nuclear

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weapon and the need for a more educated officer corps to deal with the ramifications of nuclear warfare; the "specialist-scientist" requirement an accommodation to the burgeoning complexities of the delivery systems. This could be interpreted as a shift from concern over the implications of modern warfare to a concentration on officers whose expertise lies in the technical aspects of the weapons.

The specialist requirements, combined with fiscally imposed end-strength limitations on the total size of the officer corps, result in greater percentages of accession quotas being committed to technical fields. The degree to which this changes the officer force is best exemplified by a comparison of the 1983 Air War College (AWC) class and the current accessions targeting. The undergraduate academic degree mix of the 1983 AWC student body is approximately 75 percent nontechnical to 25 percent technical (using today's criteria) versus the FY 1985 target for accessions of 75 percent technical to 25 percent nontechnical.⁸ While academic credentials are but one factor in the complexion of the officer force, it is significant to note that we have reversed that factor in 20 years—one career generation. There is no attempt here to equate "quality" in any sense to a specific kind or specialty of degree. The intent is only to portray the degree to which specialization has altered the complexion of the officer corps.

Traditional Versus Contemporary Officers

The schism in American public esteem for the military reached dramatic proportions in early 1968.⁹ As a result, one could surmise that the Air Force officer corps today is comprised of two distinct groups with regard to the sociological effects of Vietnam. Those officers commissioned prior to approximately 1968 reflect a more traditional view of military service, greatly influenced by World War II and the Korean War and the relatively strong public support present during that period. The second group is comprised of those recruited and commissioned after that point. This group, significantly influenced by the social strife associated with Vietnam and the antiwar sentiments coursing the college campuses, was forced by that environment to address military service directly—either pro or con.

As we progress further from the Vietnam era, the direct effect of the war is less and less; but the emerging character is not necessarily a return to a traditional ethos. The young people we are bringing into the Air Force as officers today question the value of traditional officership concepts. Sarkesian and Gannon cite the erosion of high regard for honor and trust in society as a major influence in the decline of American military professionalism.

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Partly as a result of Vietnam, the denigration of such values in American culture, and increased professional concern about career success and the fear of failure, honor and trust have become purely symbolic concepts not realistically embedded in the professional military ethic. Former ethical standards, idealized as they might have been, no longer seem relevant and have been replaced by standards that are primarily situational and relative.¹⁰

Thus, we now find a recruiting target population conditioned to question and whose members generally regard traditional concepts of soldiery as anachronistic. The situation today is not unlike that described by Thomas Wolfe as existing in the United States in the mid-1950s.

[I]n the 1950s it was difficult for civilians to comprehend such a thing, but all military officers and many enlisted men tended to feel superior to civilians. It was really quite ironic, given the fact that for a good 30 years the rising business classes in the cities had been steering their sons away from the military, as if from a bad smell, and the officer corps had never been held in lower esteem. Well, career officers returned the contempt in trumps. They looked upon themselves as men who lived by higher standards of behavior than civilians, as men who were the bearers and protectors of the most important values of American life, who maintained a sense of discipline, while civilians abandoned themselves to hedonism, who maintained a sense of honor while civilians lived by opportunism and greed.¹¹

Air Force Awareness

For its part, the US Air Force has not ignored the changing complexion of the officer corps. There are multiple indications that we recognize changes and, furthermore, perceive some aspects to be less than totally desirable.

A review of recent concerns within the Air Force, particularly if one considers the curriculum of the professional military schools as reflective of those concerns, validates the assertion that the Air Force officer corps has perceived an internal decline in professional quality. Beginning in the mid-1970s and continuing today, the course materials and emphases reflect increasing attention to subjects related to professionalism, leadership, officership, and so forth. Professionalism was the theme of the Air Command and Staff College (ACSC) for 1980. In the last 3 years, extensive survey and research projects have been completed to analyze the shifting priorities of Air Force officers, the most notable of these projects are Major Bonen's "Professionalism" from Lieutenants to Colonels"¹² and the "Pulse of Professionalism" study¹³ completed by Majors Daskevich and Nafziger. Both of these survey studies, conducted in different professional military education (PME) academic years, support the assertion that the officer corps is not satisfied with itself. The results of these projects confirm that the officers surveyed consider professionalism important, that the absence of official standards for defining professionalism requires that each officer define it for himself/herself, and that they generally don't consider very many of their peers to be professionals—sort of an "I'm professional but you aren't" philosophy.

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In response, professional military education curriculum has been revised to intensify the study of leadership and professionalism, and it now includes seminars, lectures, and readings on nearly every aspect of the subject. Obviously, motivation for shifting emphasis to these areas included the changing value systems reflected in younger officers.

Responding to the Change

In 1982, General Lew Allen, Air Force Chief of Staff, instituted Project Warrior with the expressed intent of reinfusing a warfighting orientation in all members of the US Air Force.¹⁴ Based upon the content of Project Warrior, it is logical to surmise that the motivation for the program was that many segments of the force had begun, for whatever reasons, to dissociate with the role of the US Air Force as a combat force. Symptoms of this dissociation had been documented through surveys and research efforts, some of which have already been cited in this study. The symptoms basically confirm a disappearing cohesion within the Air Force in general and the officer corps specifically.

Earlier programs had addressed the same perceived malaise. Air Training Command (ATC) reintroduced officer quality emphasis in its training courses on an ad hoc basis in 1978 and formally in 1981.¹⁵ Officer qualities enhancement is now a part of all officer training courses taught by ATC. General Bennie L. Davis, then Commander of ATC, initiated these programs because he perceived that there were elements of what he termed "officership" missing in many newly commissioned officers.

Concern for the quality of the officer corps is, to be sure, not a recent development. A review of the professional military journals published since 1947 reveals a cyclic emphasis on issues associated with officer integrity, cohesiveness, and identity. The timing of publication of these articles clearly indicates that the emphasis and concern appear following World War II and grow stronger until the outbreak of the Korean War, then emerge again in the mid-1950s, only to disappear as the US involvement in Southeast Asia became larger in the early 1960s. They reemerge in the early 1970s and continue to grow stronger since. It is interesting to note that in 1953 immediately following the Korean War, the Squadron Officer Course—the forerunner of the Squadron Officer School (SOS)—instituted an initiative called "Project Tiger." The cryptic description of this program in *The Air Force Review* states, "Combat orientation. Motivation for developing leadership ability and Air Force discipline."¹⁶ Project Warrior 30 years early, so it seems.

The perceptions of deficiencies have not been limited to visceral feelings or observations of declining customs and courtesies. The USAF Leadership and Management Development Center (LMDC) designed and implemented the

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Lieutenants Professional Development Seminar to correct officer qualification deficiencies identified during several years of organizational assessments conducted by their staff.¹⁷ The 5-day course addresses five subject areas: officer development, personnel management, leadership development, interpersonal skills, and problem solving. These skills appear to be basic requirements of every Air Force officer but apparently missing in a relatively large segment of newer lieutenants. "The rationale [for the program] being that new officers . . . required a real world, practical exposure to officership training."¹⁸ During 1979, the first year of the course's existence, there were three requests to present the material at USAF bases. In 1982 that number rose to 60, a clear indication that additional training for lieutenants was warranted.¹⁹ Although the LMDC has made the decision to reduce the number of seminars conducted in the future, their decision was based on manpower availability, not on any receding need for the training.²⁰

These efforts, from Project Warrior to PME studies, reflect sincere concern with officer quality, but each is a separate effort designed to impact on the existing officer corps. If we intend to permanently alter the officer corps' orientation in a specific area, we cannot rely on creating short-term programs ad infinitum. In addition, we need to permanently adjust the precommissioning and professional military education programs. Otherwise, the impact of the "fix" will last no longer than the "Band-Aid" program itself.

Unfortunately, there is no single procedure with which to effect either minor adjustments or long-term, broad spectrum changes to all phases of the accessions network. Each of the accessions sources responds to different controlling hierarchies, a problem which will be discussed at length later. While piecemeal programs can be effective in correcting a single deficiency, the lack of a cohesive guidance in accessions limits the potential for long-term, broad spectrum changes. Additionally, a major program alteration in only one of the major accessions sources, albeit necessary, effective, and appropriate for all programs, is extremely vulnerable. It may be eliminated when the sponsors of the change move on if the program is more identified with the sponsors than the deficiency it was designed to correct.

Social upheaval in this country has also left a profound impact on the US Air Force. The issues surrounding the civil rights movement have had implications for military commanders and supervisors, but the overall impact of changes in social order have been to make the services somewhat of a showcase to exemplify correct application of equal opportunity and treatment doctrines. Since the services are instruments of the Federal Government, this role is justifiable and defendable, but it does present dilemmas. For example, we have established objectives for both racial minorities and women in the Air Force officer corps which will require close recruiting management. The demand for scientific and technical officers compounds this situation since more nonwhite and female students tend to pursue nontechnical than technical degrees. This is a problem because nontechnical accession quotas are the elastic in the accessions

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management equation. As end-strength limitations reduce the allowable accession numbers, nontechnical accessions are the first reduced and the last added because they are the easiest to obtain. Therefore, we find a tendency to polarize the officer corps into a large, white, male technical base and a small, minority-dominated nontechnical segment. While meeting the specification of Department of Defense (DOD) policy, it appears this trend is contrary to the policy's intent and portends problems for future commanders.

Evolution of the Air Force Officer Corps

The US Air Force officer corps is indelibly linked to the traditional military officer but increasingly marked by an Air Force individuality. While our origins are in the US Army and the Army Air Corps, the early years of Air Force existence were marked by a pell-mell sprint to achieve parity in our own right. The desire for this immediate individuality stemmed from the rapidity with which the Air Force was born.

The Air Force was founded and developed to full maturity in only thirty years, under the pressure of two wars. The precocious growth has hindered the establishment of great traditions which mean permanency in any institution, for without a heroic past no really great hopeful future is possible.²¹

The increasing demands placed on the Air Force officer corps by technology have further accelerated the widening of differences between our officer corps and those of our sister services.

The establishment of the United States Air Force Academy (USAFA) best illustrates the fervent desire of the Air Force to create its own legacy as soon as possible after its separation from the Army. The academy was proposed, legislated, constructed, operated, and accredited within the total time span of 12 years following creation of the US Air Force. Although modeled to a large degree after the United States Military Academy (USMA) at West Point (the vast majority of original staff and key officers at USAFA were USMA graduates), the existence of its own academy offered the Air Force the ability to begin molding its elite career corps in whatever fashion it deemed appropriate.²² Over the ensuing period, from 1959 through the present, we have begun to do that, but there are obstacles to that end which must be addressed before the character of the Air Force officer vis-a-vis the Army or Navy officer can be clearly defined.

The Army and Navy are structured around an enlisted combat force commanded and led *in combat* by their officer corps. The US Air Force, however, does not commit large enlisted combatant forces in accomplishing its mission. More specific implications of the combatant identification in the Air Force are discussed at length in Chapter 2. Due to the weapon systems complexity in the Air Force, the officer corps is composed of a relatively small

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number of combatants and a large support force of specialists to support those weapon systems, both in the operational and developmental arenas. This real and complex requirement for specialists appears to encourage officers to identify with those in their specialty field first rather than to identify either with the officer corps in general or the Air Force warfighting mission. This phenomenon has already been clearly recognized in the Royal Air Force (RAF).

There is a tendency toward differentiation and stratification here which has ambiguous meaning for the future of the military profession. It is most advanced in the (Royal) Air Force where the impact of the technological revolution has been greatest. It involves a radical shift of human resources toward a pattern of "minimum fighting men backed by maximum technicians. . . ." Even if these experts are in uniform, it may be difficult to maintain a parity of esteem and a collective solidarity between them and the "mere soldiers" in the field. There is already evidence that as soldiers are trained in technical and scientific skills analogous to those of civilians, they become less willing to be treated like soldiers. Transferable skills militate against internal professional cohesion.²³

The relatively larger size of the US Air Force would make this stratification more obscure and more difficult to quantify, but even more likely to occur. It would appear that the "occupationalist" trends identified by Janowitz and confirmed by almost every PME survey conducted in the past 5 years are not only accurate, they are a logical result of the Air Force structure. As we concentrate greater numbers of accession quotas on the technologists necessary to support the continuing complexity of our weapon systems inventory, we should anticipate even greater difficulty preserving a traditional officer ethos.

In the author's opinion, it is this very fact that has focused so much concern and interest of both senior leadership and the members of the officer corps itself on problems of professionalism, leadership, and officership—labels we have attempted to use in identifying the erosion of a distinctive Air Force officer corps ethos.

Need for Action

The efforts alluded to above obviously reflect the continuing belief that preservation of a distinctive ethos—an elitism if you will—is certainly not a new or unique concern in the Air Force. Due to the speed with which changes are now affecting the complexion of the US Air Force and the officer corps, it is urgent that we act on those concerns. We need to specifically address quality concerns in the procurement systems as well as rely on tradition and influence of current officers to preserve the officer ethos through an osmotic process, as we have solely done in the past. As noted by Phillip Abrams, again in discussing the RAF but equally applicable to the USAF,

[T]he old warrior orientations—and indeed the old warriors—have not been abandoned by the military elite; . . . the advent of technologically oriented soldiers has thus made merely for dissensus within the military establishment as to the meaning of professionalism.²⁴

OFFICER CORPS IN TRANSITION

We must establish a cohesive definition of professionalism soon or the capability to preserve many important characteristics of the "old warrior" professionalism will be lost.

As discussed earlier, the academic background of the officer corps is significantly diverse. Those officers with the more traditional "generalist" degrees are becoming increasingly senior, and they will be gone within the next 10 to 15 years. The purpose here is not to infer an impending crisis due to "takeover by the technocrats"; but if we consider it worthwhile to preserve the traditional aspects of the officer ethic, we must move to do so before the bulk of the "traditionalists" depart the force. This will require immediate changes in our recruiting, screening, and precommissioning strategies.

Those officers with over 10 years' service possess the total combat experience in the Air Force. The most senior of our officers represent the last remaining combat experience from both Vietnam and Korea. Once these officers are gone, their experience with regard to combat leadership will be lost *unless* action is taken—again, immediately—to provide otherwise.

Therefore, it is both appropriate and timely that the accession network be examined now to determine if we have provided both the strategy and means to preserve a traditional officer ethos while accommodating the pressing needs of increasing specialization.

Overview

The single most important issue to be resolved in this or any discussion of quality officer production is the definition of quality. However, that definition has far too great an impact to be proposed by a single officer or in an academic document such as this. There is need for such a definition by the Air Force; for if we can agree that the critical juncture does exist, then there is a greater need than ever before to identify and preserve the Air Force officer ethos. The potential application of such a definition—a strategy for a quality Air Force officer corps—mandates that the definition be articulated by the highest echelons in the USAF. "The critiques of the officer corps . . . cry out for some definition of just what the 'good officer' is."²⁵ This monograph devotes one chapter not to the definition of officership or officer qualities, but to those aspects of an officer's credentials which must be considered in *any* definition of officer corps quality. This approach results in the conclusion that the Air Force officer corps is unique and in great need of action to preserve both its cohesiveness and capability for our primary mission—the application of aerial warfare. Following that chapter, the monograph examines the Air Force officer recruiting, screening, and precommissioning systems with the intent of demonstrating how critical an "officer quality strategy" is to the success of those efforts.

NOTES

CHAPTER 1

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CHAPTER 2

CREDENTIALS OF THE OFFICER CORPS

Despite the demonstrated growing concern for officership qualities and professionalism, the Air Force has not addressed the issue squarely by providing a clear, officially sanctioned statement of expected officer qualities. The existing official Air Force statements on requisite officer qualities are contained in at least nine separate regulations, manuals, and documents.¹ Each of these statements delineates one or more of the qualities or capabilities expected of every Air Force officer. If sufficiently pervasive, these statements could constitute a code of ethics² for the officer corps. Evidently they are not that pervasive, for they are not referenced in the officer recruiting or screening procedures for any accession source. Furthermore, they are evidently inadequate as a philosophical basis for precommissioning education core curricula since their use is not documented there either. In fact, the Report of the 25th Anniversary Review Committee on the United States Air Force Academy concluded that "there seems to be more mystique about the needs of Air Force officers and of the Air Force for various training efforts than there are facts."³ What are the implications of this allegation?

Huntington asserted that formalization and application of "standards of professional competence" and the establishment and enforcement cement of "standards of professional responsibility" are fundamental requirements for professional corporateness.⁴ More recently, Richard Gabriel has termed the need for ethics (defined as "observing obligations in a willing manner") as self-evident in any area of human behavior.⁵ Gabriel's *To Serve With Honor* is, in fact, a comprehensive and well-developed plea for the establishment of a basic officer code of ethics for the US Army.

Ethics is, therefore, a creation of men, and the need for ethics seems an absolute requirement for human society to exist. . . . The military has perhaps a greater need for ethics than any other profession because the military task involves the systematic application of social violence. The consequences of unethical behavior within the military environment are potentially far more devastating than within civilian life.⁶

Gabriel is a retired career soldier, which makes his argument even more persuasive to military officers. Unfortunately, most studies done on the officer

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ethos have been based on the theories, observations, and conclusions of experts who were outside the service, such as Huntington, Moskos, Janowitz, and others. While they are all most credible, the fact that most are "outsiders looking in" seems to cause a certain rejection of their conclusions by some career officers. Even former Secretary of the Air Force Eugene M. Zuckert, himself a civilian, agrees.

Civilian observers like Samuel Huntington, Morris Janowitz, and Walter Millis, who have written about the military profession, can provide very helpful insights and historical background. I don't believe, however, that any profession can fully understand itself until its members have thought deeply about their common attitudes, responsibilities, ethical and moral codes, and relationships with other elements of society.⁷

Finally, but most importantly, a code of ethics for the Air Force officer corps is a prerequisite to final establishment of an Air Force officer corps professional identity.

Reasons for Not Establishing a Code

The arguments supporting the need for an official statement of standards for the officer corps beg the question as to why such a standard has never been articulated. The reasons, just as in a definition of quality, are complex.

First, as implied by the introductory chapter, the continuing changes in the Air Force today call for creation of clearly understood standards which can underpin an accession strategy. That motivation has simply not existed earlier.

Second, specialization within the officer corps is a relatively recent development. Previously, the tacit policy to commission "generalists" was not only feasible, it was practiced. The practice may have been a convenience rather than intentional policy but, nonetheless, we did have rationale upon which we could justify officer procurement. The increasing requirements for specialists now makes a common identity basis for all Air Force officers difficult to conceptualize and therefore even more necessary.

If we look at current military structure, motivational techniques, and recruitment appeals, we get a sense that the changes which have taken place in a transition to a modern military have not yet been assimilated into these structures and strategies. Aspects reflecting the new realities can indeed be found but they are not yet integrated into a package which could provide both the military professional and the lower level military person a comfortable sense of their purpose, function, and credibility instead of an uncomfortable confusion as to whether things are coming apart or coming together.⁸

Third, the Air Force has perpetuated the Army model for definition of its officers. As former Air Force Secretary Zuckert points out, "A great deal of

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what we consider the stock in trade of a professional force had been provided by the Army, by experts temporarily in uniform, or by civilian specialists—or didn't exist at all.¹⁰ The Army had not perceived a need for a code of ethics for its officer corps; it is logical to assume that the Air Force hasn't needed one either. Interestingly enough, the Army has been laboring over just such a code of ethics for their officer corps since 1970.¹¹

Finally, describing a code of standards for the Air Force officer obviously involves quantifying empirical and intangible factors. Rimland and Larson identify those factors in their working definition of "quality" as follows: Quality may be regarded as having three major components:

- (1) Intellectual capacity.
- (2) Academic achievement.
- (3) Discipline/motivation.

The third component listed above is called discipline and motivation for lack of a better term. Schools refer to this aspect of quality as citizenship or deportment. "Character" might also be used.¹² The empirical factors, such as academic achievement and intellectual capacity, pose no major problem. Such factors are used already in the accessions system as primary "quality" indicators. The final factor (discipline, motivation, character, citizenship, deportment, ethics, and morals) poses the dilemma.

There are very few reliable testing procedures developed to measure empirically such an intangible quality as discipline/motivation. Discussing such measurement in the Air Force Officer Qualification Test (AFOQT), the Air Force Human Research Laboratory has stated, "Although used occasionally in the past, there are currently no instruments used to assess attitude or personality variables."¹³ In the absence of an empirical method of estimating character, or character potential, we would be forced to rely on subjective evaluations of this factor in order to include it in a definition of requisite officer qualities or standards. That would be contrary to our normal approach, since our trend has been to rely more and more on scientific solutions to all problems.

The American military's traditional reliance on military science rather than military art continues today, which is not at all surprising. American military academies are primarily engineering schools. Other commissioning programs place major emphasis on recruiting potential officers with educational backgrounds in science and engineering. With an officer corps educated in such a manner, no one should be surprised that Americans always seem to frame solutions in terms of new technology or revised organizational structure rather than clever strategy.¹⁴

These inhibitions against establishing a code of ethics certainly are not sufficient to preclude doing it now. The key is realizing the need for such a code.

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Why a Code of Ethics Now?

The need for a code of ethics now is clear. Aside from the changing complexion of the officer corps, growing diversity and specialization jeopardize an inherent officer-first ethic, an apparently basic tenet of cohesion. As mentioned before, the relative ease with which we can quantify "things of the mind" (intellectual capacity, academic achievement) versus "things of the heart" (discipline, motivation, character) place the former in a commanding position. Without a code of ethics, we will logically rely more and more on things of the mind for recruiting, screening, and educating officer candidates, especially as the specialist requirements become more clearly established.

The trends in accessions strategy clearly indicate that the quantifiable needs will become more pronounced. Prior to 1968, production goals for commissioning officers specified requirements only for pilots, navigators, and support officers. In 1968 those goals were broken down to identify pilot, navigator, scientific-technical (sci-tech), and non-technical (non-tech) requirements. The categories were delineated more specifically in 1973 to include pilot, navigator, missileer, tech, and non-tech needs.¹⁴ For 1985 accession goals, the Air Force has indicated needs for pilots (further broken down by tech and non-tech degree limitations), navigator (tech and non-tech degrees again specified), missileer, engineer (specified goals in seven different engineering specialties), sci-tech (separate goals for "sci-tech" majors versus "other technologists"), and non-technical (including some "non-techs" who must have hard science, math, and even calculus credits).¹⁵ This degree of specificity in academic credentials puts an incredibly demanding load on recruiters. Locating the right number of candidates, each with the right kind of degree, is obviously tough. For example, AFROTC operates on 152 college campuses nationwide, with affiliation at over 550 more schools through cross-town and consortium agreements. AFROTC is, therefore, available to approximately 3,000,000 college students, yet AFROTC predicts that it will be unable to meet current engineering objectives before 1987. The same degree of difficulty certainly faces recruiters for the Air Force Academy and Officer Training School. Therefore, one can conclude that the requirements for specific academic credentials have the potential to limit the pool of qualified officer candidates to such an extent as to preclude consideration of unarticulated or unclear officer quality standards—such as motivation, discipline, and character.

The "things of the heart" have not been ignored by the organizations recruiting and screening officer candidate applicants. To be sure, officership qualities have been emphasized by all three of the systems tasked to produce officers. Officer recruiters are strongly urged to emphasize officer quality, even though the definition is left to their best subjective evaluation. United States Air Force Recruiting Service (USAFRS) recruiters have unhesitatingly recommended rejection of candidates they subjectively judged substandard.

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Since 1981, AFROTC has embarked on an energetic campaign to emphasize basic officer quality in every aspect of its operation, from recruiting through the commissioning ceremony. USAFA has responded to criticism in much the same aggressive manner. However, without a common frame of reference for quality, these efforts generally reflect the subjective assessments of the officers involved in a particular program. The problem lies not in the sincerity of these efforts but in the fact that the "glue" necessary to make this emphasis on officer qualities stick is missing. That glue is a code of ethics with which *permanent* emphasis on officer quality can be attached to officer training functions.

The USAF Officer: Unique

Are there fundamental differences between Air Force officers and those of other US armed forces beyond mere service affiliation? If there are, then these differences must be considered before a code of ethics unique to the Air Force officer can be formulated.

One of the fundamental differences is the combat role of officers. Discussing the basis for military professionalism, Samuel Huntington concludes that the "management of violence" is the thread of continuity which unites military professionalism.¹⁶ While that factor is very much applicable to the Army, it cannot be used as a central uniting factor for Air Force officer professionalism. The Army is structured around the enlisted combatant force; the officer provides the combat leadership for those forces. Most Army officers have a combat-related responsibility inherent to their job description. Conversely, the Air Force combat force is much smaller and is comprised almost entirely of officer missile and aircrew members. Attempting to limit the definition of "professional Air Force officers" to only those who are involved in the "management of violence" necessarily excludes a large majority of the Air Force officer corps. There are also some enlisted members who have direct combat roles in wartime, but they are the exception rather than the rule. Combat casualty figures from World War II emphasize the Air Force-unique combat role for officers from the beginning.

In WWII there were twice as many AF officers killed and missing in action as in any other component of the Army. The Air Force [sic] lost 15,100 [officers] killed and missing. The infantry lost 6,583; the cavalry, 464; the field artillery, 976; the coast artillery, 138—a total of 8,422.¹⁷

Since the Air Force "managers of violence" constitute a relatively small segment of the total Air Force, an Air Force officer code of ethics must center on a more fundamental aspect than the "management of violence." If such a code is to have a cohesive effect, it must emphasize the institution of Air Force officership and the elitism of membership in that selective group.

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Despite the difference in roles between Air Force and Army officers, the Air Force has perpetuated the Army process for developing leaders.¹⁸ Given the difference in combat roles for most Army officers vis a vis most Air Force officers, that model could be argued as inappropriate. Most Air Force officers will not find themselves in command or supervisory positions until they have been on board for some time. Consider, for example, initial active duty assignments for a theoretical group of 8,000 new officers (based upon the accessions program for FY 1983).¹⁹ Nearly 3,200 of these officers would go to undergraduate flying training programs; their opportunity for positions of authority would be delayed for several years while they obtain flying time and related experience. Approximately 1,250 would go to engineering duties—technician positions with little requirement to command or supervise for some time. Their environment is like that of fliers: mostly all officer with themselves usually the lowest ranking military assigned. Another 500 or so would go to missile duty; again, mostly an all-officer environment with delayed placement into command or supervisory roles. Nearly 850 of the remainder would be assigned to "technical" duties. Of the remaining 2,200, nearly 1,000 would be medical service corps members, physicians, lawyers, and chaplains. Of the original 8,000, only approximately 1,200 have *potential* assignments to immediate positions of leadership and authority; and they are almost all in the "nontechnical" commissioning category.*

The Air Force-unique combatant identification and the relatively low opportunity for a substantial segment of Air Force junior officers to assume positions of appointed authority are contrary to the concept of leadership as taught in precommissioning education. While precommissioning education is the subject of Chapter 4, the point to be made here is that the leadership requirements for Air Force junior officers are unique compared to traditional officer roles. The majority of Air Force junior officers are not involved in active authority over troops early in their careers as are most Army, Marine, and Navy line officers. Furthermore, the Air Force combatant is in the minority in his own service. Even among all American combat troops, the Air Force combatant is unique in that almost all Air Force combatants are officers. It is the singularity of the Air Force officer corps which makes the clear identification of our purposes, standards, and roles—a code of duty ethics—even more necessary.

What Should a Code Embrace?

Given the need for a code of ethics, what should the code embrace? As mentioned previously, the US Army has been working toward just such a code

*Here another separate issue becomes evident. As mentioned in Chapter 1, non-tech quotas are the primary method available to achieve minority/women goals. The potential polarization of minorities/women into certain career fields therefore becomes more implicative.

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since 1970. Their introspection has identified several pitfalls in articulating a code which is too moralistic, too trivial, or too ideal. The best description of what a code of professional military ethics *should* embrace might be found in General Maxwell Taylor's comments on the need for an Army code.

As I interpret the purpose of such a code, it would be to set forth principles and standards of professional behavior to guide the deportment and development of military leaders. Limited by this specific purpose, the code would not presume to serve as a universal ethic for all men at all times or even for officers in fulfilling obligations unrelated to their profession. It would emphasize certain virtues, not for their intrinsic value for all men, but for their contribution to the formation of officers capable of performing their duties successfully in an environment of conflict.²⁰

General Taylor has hit dead center on the essence of an officer code of ethics. He goes on to enumerate his estimation of the six primary obligations of the Army officer to his profession. They are universal in nature and so could be appropriate for Air Force officers as well.

- To dedicate his active life to the military profession and fulfillment of its role in national security.
- To strive constantly for self-improvement with the ultimate goal the achievement of total fitness—professional, physical, intellectual, and moral—for the duties of an officer in peace and war.
- To set a model of excellence in the performance of duty capable of evoking the confidence and respect of his comrades of all ranks.
- To demonstrate in word and deed the possession of the cardinal military virtues of competence, reliability, justice, courage, and determination.
- To make his highest concern the discipline, training, and well-being of his men.
- To conform to the judgment of military experience that the ultimate measure of the professional worth of an officer is his ability to carry out difficult and dangerous tasks successfully at minimal cost in accordance with the decisions of his superiors.²¹

Richard Gabriel sets forth a more explicit proposed code of ethics in *To Serve With Honor*.²² His code centers on the moral obligations and responsibilities of command and would, for reasons previously established, exclude certain segments of the Air Force officer corps. Gabriel's code also assumes the center of the professional military ethic to be the management of violence, and therefore it is even less universally applicable to the Air Force officer corps.

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These examples are not cited as proposals for Air Force adoption, but only for their evidence of the growing sense of need for such a code in the American military. They represent a substantial foundation upon which the Air Force could build.

There are also examples of proposed ethical codes from within the Air Force. In July 1963, the Air Force Educational Requirements Board included "A Description of the Professional Air Force Officer" in its report on professional military education.²³ However, aside from publication in the *Air University Review* in 1964, there is no documented evidence of further use of this description. Five years later, another proposed code of ethics for Air Force officers was published in the *Air University Review* but apparently elicited no response or push for acceptance as an officer standard.²⁴ It is important to note, in both instances, that the proposals did not address "ethics of duty." The first was more an advocacy for continuing professional education, the second a code of virtues. It is logical to surmise that they were both considered inappropriate for universal application within the Air Force officer corps for these reasons.

Objections to Any Code

Aside from inapplicability in a universal sense, there are numerous other objections to the establishment of any code of ethics for the officer corps. Gabriel convincingly addressed what appears to be the nine major reservations to the establishment of military codes of ethics. They are paraphrased as follows:

1. Ethics cannot be taught but are rather a result of life experience. Rebuttal: No one is born with any professional obligations. The question is not can one teach ethics. There is no other way to acquire ethics. The real question is how best to teach ethics. No one has *any* ethical sense of a profession until he joins it and is made specifically aware of its ethical requirements. There is no clearer way to specify those obligations than to enshrine them in a formal code.
2. Ethics cannot be enforced from without. Rebuttal: A code can still provide a standard of judgment for professional action. It must be clear what ethical precepts are to be internalized.
3. A code might become a substitute for ethical judgment. Minimum standards have a way of becoming maximums. Rebuttal: Members of the profession must be made to understand that a code of military ethics constitutes only a minimum set of obligations. The existence of a code *per se* will do little unless soldiers are also educated in moral reasoning.
4. A code would state ethical obligations in an ideal form, and many of the ideals would be empirically unattainable. Rebuttal: Ethical obligations in a code of ethics should be stated in such a manner that they are hard to live up to. A minimal code of ethics which everyone can observe all the time without any real effort is not a moral code at all. Failure to live up to a code is not a criticism of the code at all as long as the precepts contained within it are attainable. On the other hand, if the gap between aspiration and attainment is too wide, at some point men will stop trying or begin to pay lip-service to codes they cannot realistically observe.

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5. It is impossible to construct a code of ethics, because the range of alternatives it would have to address would be impossibly large. Rebuttal: This legalistic argument tends to confuse a code of ethics with a body of law. The point is that a code of ethics is not a code of law; a code of ethics is stated far more generally than law, its applications cannot be specified as precisely as in law but require judgment, and its enforcement depends more on moral sanctions than on legal ones. To argue that a code of ethics for the military is impossible or useless because it does not meet the requirements of a code of law is to make a major error.
6. Under certain circumstances, the propositions of a military code may conflict. Rebuttal: The fact that some of the precepts of a code may conflict in some circumstances is not an argument for failing to establish such a code in the first place. That one soldier may value one obligation over another in a different set of circumstances does not negate the value of a code in stating the obligations that he must observe in the first place.
7. All codes are futile because they can be misapplied within the military community. The existence of a code does not guarantee compliance. Rebuttal: One cannot correct or judge ethical practices without at least some idea of what the standards of ethical actions are. The promulgation of a code will simply specify those obligations against which ethical behavior or the lack of it can be measured. Without such a standard, judgments about ethics become very difficult.
8. Members of the military could come to perceive obedience to a code as relieving them of all obligations for moral choice by simply obeying the code. Rebuttal: Following the obligations in a code of military ethics presupposes that the soldier knows *why* an obligation ought to be observed. Blind obedience to a code that is not understood is not ethical action at all; it is merely blind obedience. Obedience to a code does not remove ethical responsibility from the individual. No military man can ever escape ethical responsibility by simply following the precepts of a code.
9. A code is needed only if one believes that men are bad and cannot be relied upon to do what they ought to do by themselves. Rebuttal: If men are essentially corrupt, then the mere provisions of an ethical code will not correct this corruption. Codes are brought into existence not because men are corrupt, but because men are capable of great moral acts. It is only a secondary function of an ethical code to utilize the code to discern unethical acts; its primary purpose is to compel ethical acts.²⁵

While there are probably other objections to the formulation of a code of ethics, these appear to be the most salient and the rebuttals convincing without elaboration.

A reorientation to the purposes of this monograph is appropriate here, for it is easy to assume that this has now become an advocacy paper supporting Air Force adoption of an officer code of ethics. The purpose of the monograph is to examine the definition of "officer quality" as applied to the officer procurement systems for the Air Force. The contention has been made that no such definition exists outside of academic degree prerequisites. Adoption of a code of ethics may well be the solution to that problem, but that determination will necessarily be made at the highest levels in the Air Force. What is important is the notion that a definition of officer quality cannot be made so that it is applicable for officer procurement purposes only; it must represent the basic tenets of the Air Force officer profession. Therefore, whatever definition is applied to ensure officer quality in procurement either becomes a de facto code of ethics for the standing officer force or is meaningless as a procurement standard.

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Who Should Define Quality?

Whether we develop a code of ethics for the Air Force officer corps or merely provide a more specific definition of quality for the officer procurement systems, the question is the same: Who should propound it?

There are obviously many approaches to answer that question. The following represents one possible solution. It is suggested not as the *only* solution nor even as the best of several alternatives. Instead, it is intended to be representative of a methodology which would involve as many facets of the officer corps as possible in the determination of officer standards.

The articulation of the Air Force officer corps ethos involves five basic steps: general guideline determination, outline of the basic structure, full articulation and proposed wording, approval by senior Air Force commanders, and implementation.

General Guidelines

The general guidelines for an Air Force officer code of ethics must come from the highest levels of the Air Force and at the direction of the Air Force Chief of Staff. Gabriel and Savage list overt support of the "elite" as the primary requirement for effecting value change in a military bureaucracy; in the Air Force the Chief of Staff is at the head of that elite.²⁶ Previous attempts to derive such a code or definition of officer quality have not had this elite support and, for the most part, have gone virtually unnoticed. A code of ethics must not be offered to the officer corps as an option. While in formulation it may be influenced by inputs from all officer ranks, but once adopted it must be universally applicable. Therefore, to be effective, it must have impetus from the highest level from the onset.

The best forum to begin would be a working group, appointed directly by the Chief of Staff and chaired by a general officer. The working group need not be representative of all officer ranks, that provision will be satisfied later. The group should be as small as possible—say, no more than five or six members—and their specific purpose would be to establish the objectives of the code. Once the objectives were formulated and approved by the chief, the group's immediate task would be completed.

Basic Structure Outline

Detailing the basic outline of a code of officer ethics would be the most critical aspect of the project. The criticality is obvious since the outline would frame the

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limits and applicability of the code. Since the code should have a basis in the traditional aspects of officership, it would seem logical to have the framework established by those who represent the greatest experience as officers—namely, retired Air Force senior officers. Chaired by a retired Air Force full general (if possible, a former Chief of Staff), this panel should again be as small as possible to accomplish the task. Since a codification of ethics is extremely subjective, the more people involved in articulation the greater the potential for disagreement. Panel members should review the relevant background material from all the services and consider the specific needs and idiosyncrasies of the Air Force officer corps, then outline a general framework for an Air Force unique code of officer ethics. Upon completion, their proposal should be briefed to the Chief of Staff for approval.

Full Articulation and Wording

Fleshing out the code of ethics should involve a panel of carefully selected officers of all ranks representing most or all of the major officer career fields and chaired by a general officer. The membership should also include officers in other than line status—for example, medical service, Judge Advocate General and Surgeon General Corps, and chaplain. The retired general who served as chairman of the framework group should serve as an advisor to this group to insure continuity. Formulation of the code should be this group's sole task in order that it be accomplished without interruption or distraction. Once articulated, the proposal should again be briefed to the Chief of Staff for approval.

Approval by Senior Air Force Commanders

The proposed code of ethics would then be presented to the US Air Force senior commanders (including *all* four-star generals and major command commanders) for their approval and adoption for the officer corps. They should make the decision without staff review at either Headquarters US Air Force or lower level to avoid "wordsmithing" or petty disagreements on semantics or expression. If the senior commanders disagree, resolution should be negotiated within executive forum and changes made by the working group. If the process is relegated to a staff tasking it may never come to fruition, since the objective is, in essence, to define officer quality, and staff agreement on such a subjective issue may not be possible.

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As previously mentioned, the task requires a great amount of subjective determination. While the decision of the senior commanders may certainly be less than perfect, even an imperfect definition is preferable to no definition at all. Deferring the decision on an approved code of ethics to the commanders is the only authoritative means to establish the code without delegating responsibility to the staff level. Once delegated below the highest authority level, such a code is subject to interpretation, since it would be perceived as a set of standards designed, more or less, by peers rather than superiors.

Implementation

Once adopted, the code of ethics must be introduced to the officer corps. This education as to the intent, content, and application of the code is as critical to its success as the content. Of the eight factors cited by Savage and Gabriel in their model for military value changes, four are directly dependent on education; or as they term it, "indoctrination."²⁷ The process of indoctrination falls into three major categories: commander education and support, formal education for the officer corps, and application of the code to the officer production system.

Commander education and support is the most direct and facilitative category. The code of ethics should be passed down to commanders at all levels via chain of command communications, but not until after it has been introduced and explained fully at *major command commanders' conferences*. It is a subject easily misunderstood and discounted, so the introduction at such conferences must be conducted carefully.

The next logical step is introduction to the officer corps. Once indoctrinated and aware of the upper level support, the commanders are the proper sources to carry on the indoctrination process. At the same time, the code can be infused into a revised portion of the leadership studies segments of all professional military education curricula. The commanders' role is essential; if this responsibility is passed to another agency outside the officer chain of command, there is the possibility of misidentification of the code as a "special program" applicable only in special contexts rather than as a set of values to be internalized by the officer corps.²⁸ Furthermore, the code of ethics is for the officer corps—not a public relations issue or a response to outside criticism. It is, therefore, important that the code be introduced and explained by officers to officers, not broadcast in a public release format. Only promulgating the code through command sources can assure its initial, arbitrary acceptance as an internally generated, authoritative document.

²⁷ An example of how this can occur is the social actions program, administered within the personnel system, and perceived by many as the assumption of social actions responsibilities by the personnel system and away from the commander.

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Once the commanders have introduced the concept of the code, the formal education process can begin. Each officer should be provided with a written copy of the code. Initially, it may be prudent to require local level commanders to conduct seminars in which the code can be discussed at length, especially since there will obviously be concerns about enforcement, penalties, intent, and so forth. These seminars would be to allay fears and to emphasize that the code is not a change to existing values, but merely formalization of the tenets of officership which were heretofore understood but unarticulated. Further formal education of the officer corps will be an ever-diminishing requirement. The code will not gain universal or immediate acceptance; it will be institutionalized only through the passage of time and by senior leadership's emphasizing its importance.

It must be stressed that a code of ethics is not a "program" designed to correct an immediate or specific ill. Therefore, it cannot be introduced and forgotten, but rather must become an inherent part of the officer profession. Once initiated and emphasized, it will gradually become so—provided it remains a foundation to membership in the profession through attention and emphasis.

Perhaps the most difficult problem to overcome would be the reaction of serving officers who will interpret the promulgation of such a code as an indictment of their ethics and honor. The only means to offset this reaction is an intense, internal education of the officer corps as to the reasons and methods behind the code.

The primary means of making a code of ethics (or a definition of quality) the foundation of officer corps membership is to apply it to the recruiting and screening process. The next chapter will discuss that application.

NOTES

CHAPTER 2

1. John L. Fite, Maj, USAF, "Air Force Officer Professionalism: The Official Model" (Air Command and Staff College Student Report No. 0750-80, Maxwell AFB, Alabama, May 1980), pp. 4-5.
2. There are many ways to connote articulation of an officer "ethic." What is intended is a comprehensive statement of beliefs, standards, and expectations which form the basic precepts of the professional Air Force officer corps—a code of ethics. It is important for the reader to understand that the ethics intended are the "ethics of duty," not to be confused with "ethics of virtue." Gabriel offers a full explanation of the difference in his work (Richard A. Gabriel, *To Serve With Honor* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1982), p. 9).
3. "Report of the 25th Anniversary Review Committee," US Air Force Academy, Colorado, 1 March 1980 (typewritten), p. 23.
4. Samuel P. Huntington, *The Soldier and the State* (Cambridge, Mass.: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1957), pp. 8-10.
5. Gabriel, pp. 56-57.
6. Ibid., p. 57.
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12. "History of the Air Force Officer Qualifying Test," Air Force Human Resources Laboratory unpublished report, Brooks AFB, Texas, 1982 (typewritten), p. 2
13. Dennis M. Drew, Lt Col, USAF, "Military Art and the American Tradition," *Air University Review*, Vol. XXXIV, No. 2, January-February 1983, p. 33.
14. "AFROTC Commandant's Notebook," prepared by HQ AFROTC-XRS, Maxwell AFB, Alabama, 31 October 1981 (typewritten), pp. 27-27d.
15. Briefing on "ATC Engineer Strategy" presented by ATC/RSC to the USAF Line Officer Accessions Strategy Conference, Randolph AFB, Texas, 21 January 1983.
16. Huntington, pp. 11-13.
17. Dale O. Smith, Col, USAF, "Where Do Leaders Come From," *Air Force Magazine*, Vol. 36, No. 1, January 1953, p. 43.
18. Oron P. South, "New Dimensions In Leadership," *Air University Quarterly Review*, Vol. XII, No. 2, Summer 1960, p. 36.
19. Briefing on "Accessions Programming" presented by AF/MPPP to the USAF Line Officer Accessions Strategy Conference, Randolph AFB, Texas, 20 January 1983.

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20. Maxwell D. Taylor, Gen, USA (Ret), "A Professional Ethics for the Military?", *Officership*, ed. Lt Col Tommy D. Smith and Chaplain, Lt Col George H. Updegrove (Maxwell AFB, Ala.: Air War College, 1981), p. 167.
21. *Ibid.*, pp. 168-169.
22. *Ibid.*, pp. 138-140.
23. "AFERB Report on Professional Military Education, Vol. I, 10 July 1963," *Air University Review*, Vol. XVI, No. 1, November-December 1964, p. 91.
24. Howard G. Janssen, Capt, USAF, "A Proposed Code of Ethics for Air Force Officers," *Air University Review*, Vol. XIX, No. 3, March-April 1968, pp. 77-82.
25. Gabriel, p. 149.
26. Gabriel and Savage, p. 149.
27. *Ibid.*, p. 150.

CHAPTER 3

FINDING NEW OFFICERS

The selection of quality officer candidates is the first key to a continuing quality officer corps.

The institutionalization of an officer's qualifications is ultimately placed in the hands of those who select officers—that is, the officer corps itself, which must state and enforce rigorous selection standards. Officers of high calibre have always been a scarce commodity and will no doubt continue to be so.¹

This chapter considers Air Force officer recruiting, screening, and initial assignment of new officers and a number of factors that bear significantly on those processes. Perhaps chief among those factors is the advent of the all volunteer force (AVF), which has brought a fundamental change in our recruiting philosophy.

Recruiting and screening are considered together in this chapter because the screening criteria predispose the recruiting efforts—that is, they determine the population that recruiters must target in order to recruit successfully. The assignment agencies also bring to bear their own kinds of influence on who is recruited and how.

The chapter considers some of the instruments used and not used in the process of making new officers. It concludes with some suggested changes that could enhance an emphasis on officer quality.

Effects of the All Volunteer Force on Officer Selection

There are many factors working that influence both the way we select people for Air Force officership and the quality of the officer corps itself. The increasingly technological nature of our weaponry and support systems is an important factor and the one most widely recognized. But perhaps the most subtly pervasive one is the coming of the AVF.

Sociologist Charles Moskos strongly contends that initiating an all volunteer force implied a national "redefinition of military service from an institutional

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format to one more and more resembling that of an occupation."² While Moskos was primarily discussing the enlisted force, the effect is most acute in officer recruiting. Consider the following radio advertisement.

Engineers—have a part in solving tomorrow's technology as an Air Force engineer. Enjoy an excellent starting salary and 30 days paid vacation every year. . .³

This appeal to occupational benefits is not atypical of the current Air Force officer recruiting approach. The same tone and inferences are reflected in media advertisements for the Air Force nationwide. The rationale behind such an "econometric" recruiting approach, as Moskos terms it, is simply that the services must now compete with all other forms of employment for the available work force. Therefore, we have chosen to emphasize the advantages of Air Force employment rather than base our appeal on the less tangible attractions of professional association and elitism—much less the older virtues of patriotism and duty. This recruiting approach has led us to minimize any significant emphasis on officership in recruiting.

In Moskos' opinion, the Air Force has always been the most "civilianized" of the services in terms of recruiting approaches.

In his view, the service that has changed its standards least over the years is the Marine Corps. "Marine recruitment is least affected by economic ups and downs" [Moskos] observes. "because it is attractive more on non-economic grounds such as toughness and esprit de corps."⁴

The Marine Corps has been able to avoid succumbing to the econometric appeals partly because of its relatively small size and partly because of the elite appeal of the corps itself. Regardless of the reasons, the Marine challenge to aspirants of "looking for a few good men" and the Air Force offer of a job for all qualified applicants appear to be philosophical opposites. While it is pointless to argue the differences between the Air Force and the Marine Corps, there appears to be fertile ground between the current extrinsic Air Force appeal and the intrinsic elitism appeal of the Marines which would prove beneficial to Air Force officer recruiting.

One major adverse effect of emphasizing the benefits of service life and minimizing the demanding nature of military duty results in what Moskos terms "post-entry disillusionment."

Underlying many of the difficulties of the AVF is a source of enlisted discontent that had no real counterpart in the peacetime draft era. This is post-entry disillusionment resulting from unrealistic expectations as to what the military would offer.⁵

Moskos' statements speak directly to the physical and vocational rigors in the enlisted ranks. The responsibilities of officership are presumably more intellectual and sophisticated; their disillusion would therefore be manifested through a more philosophical dissatisfaction.

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Air Force retention figures support this. "Job satisfaction" is the primary motivation for officers to remain in the service; the lack of job satisfaction is cited as the primary reason for leaving.⁶ Since the officer corps apparently responds more to intrinsic appeals than to extrinsic entitlements, it would seem logical to emphasize the intrinsic both in recruiting and socializing officer applicants. Such an emphasis would involve stressing officer corps requirements, demands, and challenges above or at least equally with the occupational aspects of the Air Force. But that is not the current road Air Force officer recruitment is traveling.

Officer Recruiting

Officer recruiting has become an increasingly important concern since conscription ended in 1973. The lure of officership itself is no longer sufficient to draw the kind of specially educated people we need into the Air Force. This situation has forced us out of a passive officer recruiting posture and into a much more active one. Because of the different functions they fulfill in building the officer corps, each of the three line officer production organizations (USAFA, AFROTC, and Air Force Recruiting Service) maintains its own recruiting and screening network. But whereas these networks once operated unilaterally and competitively, they now practice mutual support and cooperation.⁷

In the summer of 1982, the three agencies became party to a joint cooperative recruiting agreement through which the operating recruiters are made aware of the opportunities, needs, and prerequisites of all the officer production organizations. This knowledge, and the cooperative nature of the new approach to officer recruiting, prompts representatives of each of the organizations to refer prospects to the most appropriate agency. For example, an AFROTC admissions counselor might identify to an academy liaison officer an AFROTC scholarship applicant who appears competitive for an academy appointment. Similarly, both academy liaison officers and Air Force recruiters are aware of AFROTC needs, availability, and programs for qualified candidates. Although this cooperative recruiting agreement is relatively new, it is proving to be efficient and beneficial for all involved.⁸ Against the backdrop of mutual cooperation, each agency still has its own recruiting methods and criteria.

USAFA Recruiting

The prestige and reputation of the Air Force Academy attract large numbers of applicants each year. The quality of the educational program of all the service

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academies allows them to concentrate their active recruiting efforts toward unique service needs and exceptionally promising potential scholars. US Air Force Academy recruiting is targeted principally at high school juniors rather than the college student population sought by other Air Force officer recruiting agencies. (AFROTC scholarship recruiting is the exception to this, but the numbers in that program are not significant when considering the overall officer recruiting effort for the Air Force.) The result is that USAFA operates in a buyer's market and can therefore be very selective in screening applicants. Even so, the academy operates a thorough recruiting system to insure that the field of applicants is large enough to guarantee a continuing high quality.

Prospective candidates for the academy apply for nomination in one of four categories: congressional; presidential; as children of deceased or disabled veterans or dependents of missing active duty Air Force members; and under other categorical nominations including nominations by the vice president and the delegates to Congress from the District of Columbia, Panama Canal, Puerto Rico, American Samoa, Guam, and the US Virgin Islands.⁹

The process of applying for a nomination is involved and complex. To assist prospective candidates in the application process, the academy has organized Air Force Academy liaison officers across the United States and at military bases overseas. These 1,976 individuals, composed of Air Force active duty, retired, Reserve, and former officers, are organized geographically under liaison officer coordinators who supervise, coordinate, and guide the liaison officer force.¹⁰

AFROTC Recruiting¹¹

Recruiting is an inherent part of the job at each of the 152 AFROTC detachment locations. At each unit, one of the assigned officers has the additional duty of coordinating overall recruiting activities, but all of the assigned personnel actively and continuously participate in recruiting. National advertising and additional recruiting activities are managed by the recruiting staff at Headquarters AFROTC, Maxwell AFB, Alabama. The additional activities primarily involve directing the AFROTC admissions counselor force. These 39 active duty officers, located across the United States, assist in officer recruiting in large metropolitan centers and other areas not normally exposed to AFROTC or USAFA opportunities.

Recruiting is a relatively new requirement for AFROTC. As discussed in Chapter 2, ROTC was mandatory until 1964 for students attending land grant institutions. Even after that, and until the advent of the all volunteer force (AVF) in 1973, the draft exemption offered by ROTC kept the classrooms full and provided an abundant field from which ROTC could select commissionees.

The all volunteer force concept moved AFROTC from a passive to an active role in recruiting. AFROTC's relatively recent emergence as the source of scarce specialists has concentrated that active role, to a great degree, into scholarship

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recruiting. Unlike many scholarship concepts, AFROTC scholarships are awarded based upon the needs of the Air Force rather than the need of the applicants for financial assistance. Based upon the current need for engineers and technologists, slightly more than 87 percent of the 7,000 AFROTC scholarships are held by students majoring in scientific, technical, or engineering disciplines.

On-campus AFROTC recruiting for nonscholarship enrollment primarily consists of making the program availability known to eligible students. Attractive or noncritical career fields, such as pilot and nontechnical categories respectively, do not merit extensive recruiting attention since the number of candidates for these categories usually exceeds the quotas. In such cases, AFROTC can remain highly selective.

Unfortunately, AFROTC's role as the primary source for hard-to-obtain specialists creates a "quality" dilemma. By law, all ROTC units must remain viable in order to continue operation at any specific institution. Viability is defined in the number of cadets committed by legal contract to commissioning, and the head count is taken at the beginning of the junior academic year. The viability figures include host, cross-town, and consortium schools, and, therefore, the AFROTC recruiting effort includes those institutions. At detachments where low AFROTC enrollment makes viability questionable, recruiting obviously becomes an even higher priority than normal. If detachment survival is at stake, recruiting becomes a major concern, equal to the officer training responsibilities. Emphasis on viability thus can be counterproductive to concern for quality, especially at marginal and nonviable schools.

This conflict poses a substantial challenge to the AFROTC management. Without continued awareness and emphasis on officer quality from the management, viability concern may overshadow concern for quality, especially since viability is precisely measurable and graduate quality is not, at least not as immediately. At those colleges and universities which have traditionally supported active and strong ROTC programs, recruiting is not as much a major concern. In all cases, the AFROTC role of producing hard-to-get commissionees places a significant demand on the relatively small detachment staffs (usually five to eight officers) to meet both the recruiting and teaching requirements. This diversion of time that might otherwise be available to the staff for interaction with the cadets already enrolled adversely affects the screening process. Given current constraints, however, this problem appears intractable.

Recruiting for OTS

In contrast to the dedicated recruiting agencies within AFROTC and USAFA, the US Air Force Recruiting Service is the primary recruiting agency for both officer recruiting for OTS and Air Force enlisted recruiting. Operating within the nationwide Air Force recruiting organization, recruiters identify potential OTS

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candidates and forward their credentials for selection consideration by a central Air Force board.

OTS recruiting targets primarily college graduates, except for some special programs aimed at college students otherwise ineligible for AFROTC programs. The minimum criteria for Officer Training School applicants is set forth in Air Training Command Regulation 33-2, *Recruiting Procedures for the United States Air Force*.¹² Candidates who meet the stated minimum criteria are interviewed by an officer, usually a recruiting squadron staff member. Unfortunately, this relatively short interview is the only required face-to-face contact with an officer for a candidate prior to reporting for OTS, and, since most recruiters are enlisted personnel, it is the only contact with an officer during the recruiting process for many applicants.¹³

Screening

Like recruiting, screening officer applicants varies greatly depending upon the precommissioning agency. Each of the organizations has established selection criteria beyond the minimum Air Force prerequisites. As a result, the qualifications of candidates from different accession sources can vary significantly. This potential variance is a key issue in potential officer quality; but in order to discuss the reason for the differences, one must first have a basic understanding of the screening processes.

Initial screening occurs during the recruiting process, of course, so that those candidates actually recruited meet the minimum standards for Air Force officers. In the absence of Air Force-wide specific standards for officer qualifications, each officer-producing agency establishes its own. In general, these standards involve academic, physical, and moral criteria. Common academic predictors are the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) and the American College Test (ACT), or the Air Force Officer Quality Test (AFOQT), depending upon the target group. The Air Force Academy also requires a formal physical aptitude test. Moral character is commonly deemed adequate if the candidate has no criminal record. None of the officer production agencies conducts psychological testing as such; they apparently rely on subjective evaluation of performance during training as a psychological aptitude predictor. With these common approaches, attrition rates vary as each agency screens in its own particular way.

USAFA Screening

The Air Force Academy candidate screening process is quite involved and lengthy. In fact, appointment to the academy involves two distinct selection processes.

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First, all applicants for nomination must meet academic and physical minimum standards in order to qualify for competition. The academic qualification is measured through Scholastic Aptitude Tests or American College Tests. Applicants must also pass a physical aptitude test to measure coordination, strength, endurance, speed, and agility. Interestingly enough, the academy is the only Air Force officer production agency to require a physical aptitude test prior to selection.¹⁴

Second, qualified applicants are considered for nomination in one of the four categories identified earlier in this chapter. This competition is fiercely competitive, with approximately 12,000 applicants vying for fewer than 2,000 appointments.¹⁵

Those applicants who receive principal nominations may be appointed as soon as they meet all other entrance requirements. The nominees who do not meet all entrance requirements until after the early appointments are tendered (March of each year) must then compete again for the remaining appointments. In this case, selections for appointment are made by evaluation panels composed of senior officers assigned to the Air Force Academy.

The evaluation is based primarily on academic and leadership potential, as well as any indication of motivation and aptitude for the academy which may be available in the candidate's record. The panels list candidates in order of merit according to their selection composite, called "whole-person" scores.¹⁶

The procedures outlined above are the preadmission processes for the Air Force Academy, but it is not accurate to assume that the screening process stops there.

One could argue that attrition (during the 4-year program) represents a final screening and selection process for entry into leadership in the Air Force and that such screening is a mission—perhaps *THE* mission—of the academy.¹⁷

Current attrition rates for the academy exceed 40 percent, and the argument as to whether such loss rates are acceptable or excessive is not at issue here. The fact is that the academy process yields approximately 900 graduates from over 12,000 applicants and is, therefore, statistically the most stringent and selective of the precommissioning processes.¹⁸ For the intended source of a career elite for the Air Force, this would seem to be most appropriate.

AFROTC Screening

Screening AFROTC cadets for officer potential is also a lengthy process. The first 2 years of the 4-year program are purely voluntary, except for scholarship cadets. There is no legal commitment to a commission on the part of the Air

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Force, nor does the cadet incur a commitment in return for the AFROTC training given during the freshman and sophomore year.¹⁹ This 2-year period serves two purposes: it allows the detachment staff to observe the cadets for officer potential, and it affords the cadets an exposure to the Air Force opportunities and to the implications of military service.

The AFROTC 2-year program is quite a different matter; it does not afford either party this observation period. Therefore, the staff's estimates of officer potential are much more subjective. For this reason, there are relatively fewer 2-year programs offered, and those are to meet specific objectives where a 4-year program is either infeasible or undesirable. An example of this is at California Polytechnic Institute. Due to extremely high dropout rates of scholarship holders after the first 2 years (and before they incurred an active duty commitment), the AFROTC program there was changed to a 2-year program only. For a more detailed description of the 2-year AFROTC program, see note 20 at the end of this chapter.

AFROTC uses a complex comparative analysis system to select qualified entrants into the final 2 years of the program leading to a commission. The system, called the Weighted Professional Officer Course Selection System (WPSS), is the final formal precommissioning filter. The WPSS considers four factors: Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) scores, Air Force Officer Qualification Test (AFOQT) scores, college grade point average, and the detachment commander's evaluation of the cadet. From these factors, a Quality Index Score (QIS) is ascribed to each cadet during the sophomore year. Those cadets with a QIS at or above a predetermined minimum are offered a commissioning contract contingent upon their successful completion of the remaining 2 years' study plus such AFROTC requirements as field training.

Cadets with QISs near the minimum may still obtain a contract and a commission. Their records are forwarded to Headquarters AFROTC and considered by a central selection board. This board functions in much the same manner as the academy evaluation panels. Contracts may be offered to the best qualified applicants. Although the cadets selected by the WPSS are under legal commitment to the Air Force in return for the promise of a commission upon graduation, they may still be removed from the program for breaching their contract. This is a relatively infrequent occurrence, but it does happen for such reasons as civil or criminal involvement or academic deficiency. Therefore, the entire AFROTC college program is, in effect, a screening process—but at a much less intense degree than the Air Force Academy or Officer Training School—since cadets are in AFROTC class for only approximately 2 hours per week.

This limited face-to-face contact with the officer candidates in AFROTC is a problem. It restricts the exposure of the cadets to the detachment staff—exposure through which the detachment staff must subjectively evaluate the cadet's officer potential. This subjective analysis counts heavily in the selection process—in fact, it constitutes one-quarter of the total cadet evaluation. Contact with the

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cadets is further diluted because contact time is divided among several members of the detachment staff. Initiatives which would increase this exposure are limited since the students' availability is constrained by the university schedule.

OTS Screening

Screening candidates for OTS is a rather impersonal process. A central board at USAFRS headquarters makes selections based upon information in the nomination folders. The sequence of events is as follows.

After each OTS selection board, the USAFRS staff compiles a composite profile of the average selectee's credentials: AFOQT scores, college major and grade point average, and so forth. This profile is then forwarded to the recruiting organizations and used as a comparative model for officer applicants. Except for instances of major changes in the recruiting targeting (such as a sudden and unprecedented requirement for administrative officers), the profile has proven to be an effective prognosticative device. Those applicants who parallel the profile most closely are the most likely to be selected by the next board. However, even if an applicant does not "fit" the profile, elimination is not automatic; the application still may be forwarded for consideration by the board.²¹

Recruiters in the field forward the applicants' records to USAFRS headquarters for consideration by a selection panel. The board determines an order of merit ranking and designates selectees on a basis of accession training quotas.

Specific criteria for selection is established in ATCR 33-2, and USAFRS does not impose additional requirements. Personality or character criteria are encompassed by the requirement for candidates to be of "good moral character," which is interpreted to mean no civil or criminal record.²² While this interpretation is applied both to OTS applicants and AFROTC cadets, the limited contact with OTS applicants during the recruiting cycle and the relatively short duration of OTS would seem to indicate that the absence of a criminal record as confirmation of "good moral character" is superficial and possibly unreliable.

In defense of the OTS recruiting system, it must be reemphasized that recruiters are strongly encouraged to make subjective judgments concerning officer applicants, especially when they perceive that an applicant is substandard. In the absence of both specific Air Force guidance on quality and adequate character/personality evaluation methods, such judgment depends upon the individual recruiter's concept of officership. This is especially implicative since, in most cases, enlisted recruiters are making the subjective analysis of officer potential. Just as in AFROTC, the quality of the recruiter becomes more significant.

The OTS program is also part of the screening process. Although the plebe system atmosphere of earlier years no longer exists, the program is still

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demanding. Attrition is currently near 20 percent, and most eliminations are self-initiated. The time/pressure environment during the 12-week course affords the staff a good opportunity to observe the candidates' officer potential and reaction to stress.

Tests and Nontests in Officer Candidate Evaluation

In an age increasingly beset with testing for every aspect of life, the Air Force seems to be overreliant on one good instrument (the Air Force Officer Qualifying Test). At the same time, it neglects the area of personality testing, which appears to offer fruitful rewards in determining candidate quality for officership.

The Air Force Officer Qualifying Test

The Air Force Officer Qualifying Test (AFOQT) is the only officer candidate screening examination designed and employed by the Air Force in selecting its officers. The other factors considered in the selection process (grade point average, academic major, scholastic aptitude test scores, and so forth) are all external to the Air Force.

The current AFOQT evolved from the aircrew classification batteries of World War II and the Aviation-Cadet Officer-Candidate Qualifying Test of 1950. It is revised biennially. The test is designed and constructed to predict aptitude for training programs leading to a commission or, as in the cases of pilot and navigator technical subtests, programs leading to an aeronautical rating. The test predicts the *academic aptitude* of the candidate for those programs and it is valid for that purpose. It is not designed for predicting *officer potential*; but in the cases of AFROTC and OTS, it has come to be used for that purpose.

The AFOQT is a battery of 16 subscales which combine to yield 5 composite percentile scores measuring pilot, navigator-technical, academic, verbal, and quantitative aptitudes.

The AFOQT is . . . a device for measurement of aptitudes important to various officer programs in the Air Force. It is used in the selection of candidates for most training programs leading to a commission and in the qualification of certain categories of applicants for a direct commission. In most cases . . . the only measure of a candidate's aptitude for a program is his AFOQT performance. In programs where minimum qualifying scores exist, AFOQT scores can be the sole basis for rejecting a candidate.²³

The AFOQT is the primary screening instrument for AFROTC and OTS applicants aside from physical qualification standards. For AFROTC, the

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AFOQT constitutes one-fourth of the Quality Index Score used to select those cadets to be offered a commissioning contract. OTS does not weigh consideration factors in the same manner as AFROTC. Based upon the data available for consideration by selection boards, AFOQT scores appear to constitute nearly one-third of an OTS applicant's profile.

The Air Force Academy does not use the AFOQT. Considering the unusually high academic quality of the average applicant and the inherent screening properties of the academy process, there seems little to gain from using the AFOQT there—especially since the battery does not provide any profile beyond academic aptitude. There seems to be no need for another test of officer potential at the academy; academy graduates historically have the lowest attrition rates of any accession source from active duty training programs.

The heavy dependence of AFROTC and OTS on the ability of the AFOQT to predict officer potential raises the question of whether the battery is good enough to justify its use as the single testing device. A careful examination of the AFOQT would seem to indicate that the answer to that question is no.

It can be argued that AFROTC and OTS rely excessively on AFOQT scores as predictors of *officer potential* simply because there is no other empirical evaluative tool. The battery, however, is designed to predict the *academic aptitude* of the candidate for training programs leading to a commission or an aeronautical rating. The test may be effective and accurate but only when used within its limitations.

Personality/Character Assessments

One of the apparent limitations of the AFOQT is its inability to measure elements of personality or character aptitude of officer candidates. The Air Force has incorporated personality-type testing in past versions of the AFOQT. These subtests were titled Officer Biographical Inventory and Pilot Biographical Inventory, and were designed to identify traits and characteristics known to be related to success in officer precommissioning training or undergraduate flying training courses, respectively.²⁴ According to the Air Force Human Resources Laboratory, these subtests have since been dropped from the AFOQT battery, because the results did not yield sufficient score deviations to be useful as discriminators.

The inability to assess personality or character through the AFOQT raises a larger question. Are there methods to evaluate empirically such factors as character, motivation, and discipline? If so, then why aren't they employed in the Air Force officer selection process?

Personality testing—the measurement of emotional judgment, interpersonal relations, motivation, interests, and attitudes—is a controversial subject for many reasons.

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All available types of personality tests present serious difficulties, both practical and theoretical. Each approach has its own special advantages and disadvantages. On the whole, personality testing lags far behind aptitude testing in its positive accomplishments. But such lack of progress is not to be attributed to insufficient effort. Research on the measurement of personality has reached impressive proportions since 1950, and many ingenious devices and technical improvements are under investigation. It is rather the special difficulties encountered in the measurement of personality that account for the slow advances in this area.²⁵

Despite the controversial aspects of personality testing, the potential for using this type testing in officer candidate screening appears good. The Identity Research Institute (IRI) of McLean, Virginia, has been conducting personality tests on military officers for over 10 years and has amassed what appears to be the largest existing data base on military officers in this field. The tests were completed as part of IRI's Strategy of Career Transition course taken by over 11,000 military officers during the past 12 years.²⁶

IRI employs a battery of tests which include the Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory, the Edwards Personal Preference Schedule, and the Strong-Carlson Vocational Interest Blank, all well known and accepted psychological testing instruments validated through years of use. The analyses of these tests identify the dominant characteristics and emotional traits of the subject. Through a comparison of the results obtained from the 11,000 subjects tested, a profile or template emerges which is characteristic of successful military officers.²⁷

Based upon the results of the IRI efforts, Dr. Stanley Hyman, president of IRI, and Dr. Henry David, chief psychologist for IRI, believe that similar psychological testing could be used in the officer candidate screening process. Such testing would be most useful, in their opinion, to screen out candidates grossly unsuited for officer duty. However, both Hyman and David emphasize that the development of such testing must be deliberate and cautious.

Hyman contends that the success of personality testing in screening depends upon the *careful* (emphasis is his) selection, retention, and continuity of the experts who would analyze the test results. He believes that the failure to recognize the preeminence of analysis over the selection of a test instrument would be disastrous and render the process useless or even detrimental. He believes that the requirement for a dedicated analytical staff, when combined with the necessary scale of the testing requirement (more than 10,000 per year), may be beyond the capabilities of the Air Force.

Dr. David has a more basic concern. He feels that the potential for psychological screening is feasible. In his opinion, the fundamental requirement is for the Air Force to articulate "exactly what it is looking for in an officer." Once that requirement is satisfied, David says a program could be slowly developed to screen candidates. His concern speaks directly to the need for articulated standards—the kind of articulation advocated earlier in Chapter 2.

Despite the obstacle, the potential benefits to be realized from personality testing would appear to justify continued research into its use in screening.

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While the results of such research may prove that the process is still infeasible, research is the only means to find some means to include personality/character screening into the selection process.

Assignment System Influence

There are innumerable influences on officer candidate procurement and production, ranging from the capacity of America's educational institutions to the budgetary limitations imposed on the military services. One particular factor that could become adversely dominant is within Air Force control. This factor involves the influence of the assignment system on officer production management.

Active duty assignments for newly commissioned officers are made by the Officer Accessions Division of the Air Force Manpower and Personnel Center. In simple terms, the division attempts to match the qualifications of the new officer to Air Force job requirements. For those officers accessed against specific category requirements, such as pilot, navigator, and missileer, the process involves matching available training quotas to individuals. However, the less specific accession categories (engineer, scientific-technical, nontechnical) are more difficult to match to specific assignments.

In these categories, the new officer's credentials are subjected to additional screening by the assignments staff. It is here that "quality" considerations related to the academic institutions become involved. There are recognized variances in the quality of the different colleges and universities, as well as differences in the academic content of identically titled degrees from different schools.²⁸ To accommodate these variances, the Officer Accessions Division staff, in many cases, must consider the specific requirements of a potential assignment against the qualifications of the commissionee. For the graduates of the better known and more highly regarded institutions, this does not pose a great difficulty. However, for commissionees entering from the less-well-known or poorly regarded schools, the assignment generally results from the ability of the accessions managers to "sell" the new officer to the particular resource manager involved. The task is demanding at best, and in some cases has resulted in complete recategorization of a commissionee—for example, from technical to nontechnical.

As a result of this procedure, the assignments representatives to the accessions strategy sessions have become increasingly vocal in their desire for more specific academic prerequisites in the officer production goals. Additionally, a current proposal originated by the assignment community would establish a core undergraduate academic curriculum.²⁹ If adopted by the Air Force, this proposal would specify academic credit in four general study areas totalling

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approximately 24 semester hours as a prerequisite for all officer aspirants. These study areas may or may not be related to the students' major fields of study, but rather would be designed to provide a common base of exposure to subjects perceived by the personnel resource managers to be essential for all Air force officers.

The intent of the proposal is understandable, but adopting such a plan would exacerbate the "quality" dilemma. First, it would have the effect of establishing a de facto officer studies degree. AFROTC would have some degree of influence over its cadets to ensure that the core curriculum requirements were met, but not in all cases. For instance, engineering students at several of the major engineering schools must extend beyond the normal 4-year college schedule already in order to include AFROTC classes in their studies. The proposed curriculum plan would cause even greater problems. Second, the Air Force would have absolutely no ability to influence the undergraduate studies of OTS applicants since, in most cases, they don't even apply for OTS until near or after college graduation. The proposal for core curriculum requirements as commissioning prerequisites would have the effect of reducing the qualified pool of applicants for this commissioning source significantly. If the proposed curriculum areas are considered essential for all Air Force officers, perhaps a more viable solution would be to use those subjects as the basis for PME.

As long as "quality" remains predominantly a function of academic credentials, the accession system will prefer candidates who meet academic prerequisites for assignment to candidates who possess nonspecific academic credentials (read nontechnical degrees). Unless the Air Force closely monitors the process by which officer production objectives and criteria are established, the assignment managers will naturally press for more specific educational requirements than are operationally necessary in order to facilitate the assignment process. We have already seen a substantial increase in the specificity of such requirements since 1968 (see Chapter 2). Further increases should be approached with great caution so that we do not effectively close the door of officer eligibility to all except a small pool of applicants.

Improving Officer Candidate Selection

The existing officer recruiting and screening mechanisms are providing sufficient numbers of commissionees to keep the officer ranks full. Even in the critical area of engineers, the intensive efforts of the recruiting systems have worked well, and it now appears that we will meet Air Force objectives for engineers within the next few years. The challenge of increasing the consideration of officer quality in the recruiting and screening process is finding how to do so without reducing the proven ability of the system to provide sufficient numbers of officers.

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Therefore, any approach that seeks to accommodate the increasing concern for officer quality must be cautious. The following four-step approach is suggested as a means to gradually increase the awareness and concern for officer quality while preserving the existing educational criteria. It involves increasing a stress on officership, increasing research into personality testing, instituting physical testing standards, and assuring a continuing supply of well-qualified nontechnical officers.

Balanced Criteria

First, the Air Force must begin to emphasize technical competence and officership quality equally in recruiting and advertising. Practically speaking, this means increasing the emphasis on officer quality. In the past, we have assumed that average officer applicants would inherently possess the fundamental moral standards required of Air Force officers. We can no longer make that assumption.

With regard to the volatility of ethical belief within our national culture, the United States has undergone massive ethical upheavals in the current century—indeed, as have all Western democracies. Such a condition is attributable to both the general drift of axiological philosophy itself and the increasingly pluralistic character of the culture. In the first instance, formal ethical theory has become markedly relativistic and voluntaristic. [1]n substance, the climate evoked has strongly tended to reduce the conforming power of certain social institutions to imbue their members with more or less explicit moral codes, and, correspondingly, there has been an increase in the scope of individual decision making in the realm of moral choice. Secondly, the pluralistic nature of evolving democratic societies has weakened the potency of a "civic" ethic, an overriding cultural consensus on matters of moral rectitude. A "balancing of interests" tends to replace a core ethic as the fundamental crux of social life.³⁰

These changes in the basic fabric of American society require that the Air Force honestly and openly represent its different and more demanding ethical standards from the beginning. That beginning, in this case, is in all aspects of recruiting and advertising. The adoption of a code of ethics for the officer corps would obviously facilitate a move towards greater emphasis on officer corps quality in recruiting and selecting officer candidates. With or without a code of ethics, an equal representation of the requirement for officers to possess both vocational expertise *and* character quality would have a positive effect. This could range from a Hawthorne effect on the perceptions of the existing officer corps towards ethical values to a recruiting appeal of elitism similar to the Marine Corps approach to recruiting. In either case, officer aspirants would be more aware of an official Air Force concern for and emphasis on officership qualities from the beginning of their association with the officer corps. Of

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course, the long-term effect would depend upon the reinforcement of that concern and emphasis in daily Air Force life.

Personality Testing Research

Second, the Air Force should intensify research into personality testing. While the final results may again reveal that such testing is still infeasible for officer recruiting, the research may well uncover methods and data that can improve the existing screening systems. Without such research, we will continue to rely more and more on the AFOQT, despite its limitations.

As an interim measure, there are means to improve the subjective evaluation of prospective officer candidates in AFROTC and OTS. This could be accomplished by establishing a board interview requirement to the application process prior to selecting contract nominees. Such boards could be composed of recruiting squadron staff officers for OTS applicants or AFROTC detachment staffs for AFROTC cadets. For standardization, the Air Force Human Resources Laboratory could design the board interview format. The interview should cover specific questions and discussion topics to provide the board members with a sample of the applicant's reaction to the stress of the situation; ability to think, react, and speak extemporaneously; and knowledge of current events. This procedure could also include the requirement for a short written essay, prepared just prior to the interview, on a designated subject such as officership, patriotic values, and so forth. The purpose of the essay would be to analyze the candidate's writing ability as well as attitude on the subject.

The results and analysis from such a process would be imperfect, but they would be an improvement over the current system. We have acknowledged the inability to evaluate character, motivation, and discipline empirically, but there is no reason to avoid considering those factors. This suggested interview procedure would provide, at least, a subjective evaluation of those factors as well as some increased face-to-face contact between officer candidates and officers prior to commissioning.

Physical Fitness Testing

Third, it seems appropriate to add a physical fitness evaluation to the officer candidate selection process. The Air Force has reemphasized fitness and conditioning in the active force, and it appears counterproductive to accept officer candidates who do not meet Air Force standards when they enter. An

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evaluation similar to the Air Force Academy's would be sufficient, and, as in the case of overt presentation of officership requirements in recruiting, advertising the physical fitness prerequisite could have positive side effects in the standing officer corps.

Room for the Generalists

Finally, close management scrutiny must continue in the establishment of educational requirements in officer production objectives and strategy. Without continued attention, the potential exists to legislate excessive academic prerequisites for the convenience of the accession process. Where legitimate, appropriate, and realistic prerequisites exist, we must meet them with a supply of qualified candidates, but we cannot afford to become so enamored with technical credentials that we eliminate room for the generalist in the officer corps. The generalists must still offer a balance against a total reliance on technology to win our wars.

First . . . thorough understanding of the purposes, capabilities, and limitations of military power forms the foundations required to provide political leaders with sound and believable military advice. The American military must be able to do more than say "can do" or, on rare occasions, "cannot do." The military must also be able to say "should do" and "should not do" as the situation warrants. Only if well founded in the "why" of warfare can the military offer this sort of professional advice and have it accepted.

Second, but perhaps most important, a sound knowledge of the art of war provides a conceptual framework for analyzing strategic and tactical problems, technological developments, and the impact of related issues on military operations.

The future success of the American military lies in the mastery of military art and its application in concert with military science.³¹

Summary

The recruiting and screening processes respond to guidance and limitations established by the Air Force. Air Force criteria have forced the officer-producing agencies into a posture of selecting candidates on a basis of quantifiable data such as academic credentials and aptitude tests. The system is thus becoming overbalanced toward technical fields specializations and away from encouraging abstract thinkers; toward the specialists and away from the generalists. Without a change to Air Force-wide guidance on officer quality, the officer-making processes will continue to become more efficient—in producing along the same lines.

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There is a need for a balance between the "things of the mind" and the "things of the heart" in officer recruiting. Technological expertise will certainly produce weapons of greater sophistication and efficiency, and technical competence is certainly needed to operate those weapons; but it is the character of the combatants which will turn that technical superiority into victory in war. As General Patton tells us:

Success in war lurks invisible in that vitalizing spark, yet as evident as the lightning—the warrior's soul—it is the cold glitter of the attacker's eye, not the point of the questing bayonet, that breaks the line. It is the fierce determination of the driver to close with the enemy, not the mechanical perfection of the tank, that conquers the trench. It is the cataclysmic ecstasy of conflict in the flier, not the perfection of his machine gun, which drops the enemy in flaming ruins. Yet volumes are devoted to armament; pages to inspiration.³²

General Patton's observations are no less valid today than in 1926 when he made them. We must balance our approach to officer procurement between the ability to devise the armament and the warriors to employ them successfully.

NOTES

CHAPTER 3

1. Richard A. Gabriel and Paul L. Savage, *Crisis in Command* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1978), p. 55.
2. Charles C. Moskos, "Making the All Volunteer Force Work: A National Service Approach," *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 60, No. 1, Fall 1981, p. 22.
3. WLWI, radio advertisement, 28 March 1983.
4. Charles C. Moskos, quoted in "Military Jobs: A Pretty Good Place to Start," *Changing Times*, Vol. 37, No. 5, May 1983, p. 36.
5. Moskos, "Making the All Volunteer Force Work," p. 24.
6. Lt Gen Andrew P. Iosue, USAF, speech to Air Command and Staff College class of 1983, Maxwell AFB, Alabama, 3 December 1982.
7. Telephone interview with Lt Col Frank Tantillo, Headquarters AFROTC Recruiting Division Chief, 15 April 1983.
8. Brig Gen W. Scott Harpe, Commander, US Air Force Recruiting Service, quoted in "Commissioning Service Cooperation," *Air Force Magazine*, Vol. 66, No. 4, April 1983, p. 113.
9. There are also procedures for nomination of enlisted members of the active and reserve components.
10. *United States Air Force Academy Catalog, 1982-83* (USAF Academy, Colo.: US Government Printing Office, 1982), pp. 57-67.
11. The author served as AFROTC Chief of Staff, Maxwell AFB, Alabama, from October 1981 through July 1982. The information otherwise unreferenced regarding AFROTC procedures and problems reflects his first-hand knowledge and experience.
12. Air Training Command Regulation 33-2, *Recruiting Procedures for the United States Air Force* (Randolph AFB, Tex.: Department of the Air Force, 1982).
13. Telephone interview with Maj Brian P. Quarrie, Commander, 3561 Recruiting Squadron, Seattle, Washington, 4 April 1982.
14. *USAF Academy Catalog*, pp. 63-66.
15. Iosue (6).
16. *USAF Academy Catalog*, p. 65.
17. "Report of the 25th Anniversary Review Committee," US Air Force Academy, Colorado, 1 March 1980 (typewritten), p. 18.
18. Iosue (6).
19. AFROTC scholarship cadets are an exception to this statement. Since 1982, 4-year scholarship recipients incur an active duty commitment starting with the second (sophomore) year if they are disenrolled for a reason over which they had control. Scholarship cadets make up 7,000 of the approximately 25,000 total AFROTC cadet corps.
20. The AFROTC 2-year program is designed to accommodate junior college transfers (there are no junior college AFROTC units) and other special situations such as California Polytechnic Institute. The difference between the 2-year and 4-year program is that the 2-year cadets attend an additional 2 weeks of summer training (6 weeks versus 4 weeks for 4-year cadets) prior to their junior year.

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During this 2 weeks, the academic content of the freshman and sophomore years are covered. The final 2 years of the 4-year program and the 2-year program are identical.

21. Quarrie (13).
22. Ibid.
23. "History of the Air Force Officer Qualifying Test," Air Force Human Resources Laboratory, unpublished report, Brooks AFB, Texas, 1982 (typewritten), pp. 2, 4.
24. AF PT 901, *United States Air Force Officer Qualifying Test Manual for Interpretation* (Brooks AFB, Tex.: US Government Printing Office, 1975), p. 1.
25. Anne Anastasia, *Psychological Testing* (London: The Macmillan Company, 1968), p. 18.
26. Interview with Dr. Stanley Hyman, President, Identity Research Institute, at Maxwell AFB, Alabama, 11 March 1983.
27. Interview with Dr. Stanley Hyman, President, Identity Research Institute, and Dr. Henry David, Chief Psychologist, IRI, at McLean, Virginia, 1 June 1983.
28. When the AFROTC Weighted Professional Officer Course Selection System (WPSS) was first devised in 1974, a factor was included to weight the relative quality of various colleges and universities. The factor was derived from the Astin rating, an independent college rating service which ranked major US schools on a 1-to-7 scale. Use of the Astin rating was discontinued after brief use when it was determined that the procedure discriminated unfairly against some minority schools. AFMPC agencies are currently developing an Air Force-unique system for similar purposes for use in the accessions process.
29. Col Charles G. Colvin, Chief, Educational Programs Division, Directorate of Personnel Programs, Headquarters USAF Deputy Chief of Staff, Personnel, to Headquarters AFROTC Director of Operations and Training, et al., subject: Core Curriculum Conference, 15 March 1983.
30. Donald Atwell Zoll, "The Moral Dimension of War and the Military Ethic," *Parameters*, Vol. XIII, No. 2, June 1982, p. 2.
31. Dennis M. Drew, Lt Col. USAF, "Military Art and the American Tradition," *Air University Review*, Vol. XXXIV, No. 2, January-February 1983, p. 31.
32. Martin Blumenson, *The Patton Papers, 1885-1940* (Boston, Mass.: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1972), pp. 796-797.

CHAPTER 4

THE SOCIALIZATION PROCESS

There are many parallels between the management of civilian industry and the responsibilities of Air Force officership. Especially since the McNamara era, the Air Force—and indeed the entire defense complex—has been embroiled in a continuing controversy over the compatibility of the business-management philosophy and the military leadership ethic. Notwithstanding the arguments for either school, there remains one irrefutable aspect of military service that does not exist in the civilian business world. This aspect is the involvement of the military in armed conflict.

Huntington termed this aspect the "management of violence." While he used the phrase to describe those directly involved in combat, it applies in some degree to everyone who wears a military uniform. Were it not for this unique aspect of military duty, there would be no need to conduct initial military qualification training for those entering the service. The standards, mores, and practices of the civilian world would be acceptable; we could, in fact, conduct orientation on the job. But the fact is that every soldier, regardless of his or her specialty, has the potential to be ordered into a situation which may be life threatening. This peculiarity of military service makes the socialization of the soldier to the military not just a necessary orientation to the rigors and standards of duty but critical to the existence of the military as a fighting force. For Air Force officers, the socialization process formally begins in precommissioning education. This chapter looks at the three systems which conduct precommissioning training for the Air Force. Next, it examines the basis for precommissioning curriculum and the application of that basic guidance in the three systems. From that analysis, it determines what changes, if any, would be appropriate to make these systems more effective. To begin, it is important to understand how the three major precommissioning systems have evolved.

The Precommissioning Triad

The Air Force commissions line officers today from three sources: Air Force Reserve Officer Training Corps (AFROTC), Officer Training School (OTS), and

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the United States Air Force Academy (USAFA). While these three now fit into an appropriate and balanced blend of long and short-lead accessions, they evolved from separate and uncoordinated needs.

Air Force Reserve Officer Training Corps¹

Military training at colleges and universities in the United States began as a result of the Morrill Act of 1862. This act mandated such training for land-grant institutions, but it was not until the National Defense Act of 1916 that the formal Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC) was established. Following World War I, and no doubt as a result of the growing appreciation of airpower from that war, seven ROTC units were designated as Air Service organizations during 1920-23. However, in 1932, Air ROTC was discontinued nationwide due to budget reductions and "other reasons." ROTC production of air corps officers did not resume until 1946 when 76 air units were established by executive order. Air Force Reserve Officer Training Corps (AFROTC) was begun in its own right coincident with the establishment of the US Air Force in 1947.

In 1952, AFROTC became a subordinate unit under Air University. Air University was merged with Air Training Command from 1978 until 1983. Although Air University was again designated as a major command in 1983 and separated from ATC, Air Force ROTC was retained in Air Training Command because of the advantages of unified management over the two major officer production organizations.

Initially a 4-year program, AFROTC was expanded in 1964 with the creation of a 2-year curriculum and the establishment of a scholarship program. AFROTC currently administers 7,000 scholarships and uses them as a means to contractually secure officer candidates with degrees in critical specialties.

Enrollment in AFROTC peaked in 1968 at 108,475; production reached its highest the year prior when 5,896 new officers were commissioned. Current annual production levels are programmed to remain stable at or near 3,200, and total enrollment is near 25,000 students.

Air Force ROTC has assumed a key role in officer production as the source of scarce specialties which must be recruited early in the candidates' educational process. When ROTC was mandatory at the land grant schools, large numbers of potential officers in many different specialty fields were enrolled in AFROTC. This is no longer the case. With ROTC no longer mandatory, enrollment in AFROTC declined each year from the 1968 high of over 108,000 to a low of less than 17,000 in 1976. Enrollment has increased slowly (by design) since that low to the current level of 25,000. The controlled increase results from the use of AFROTC as the primary source of specific hard-to-get specialties for the Air Force, especially those specialties associated with the increased technical

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sophistication of Air Force weapon systems. Additionally, AFROTC remains the major source of pilots, navigators, and support officers. Most recently, the critical need has been for engineers, and as a result most of AFROTC's scholarships are awarded to students pursuing engineering or technical degrees. A small number of scholarships—approximately 15 percent—are reserved to achieve minority recruiting objectives and other motivational programs such as the field training encampment commandant's award. The majority of the scholarships are used to fulfill specialty requirements by contractually securing scarce people with skills as far in advance of graduation from college as possible.

Officer Training School²

Conversely, Officer Training School (OTS) is a short leadtime program designed to ensure that officer authorizations do not remain vacant unnecessarily. OTS combines the functions of the Aviation Cadet Program and Officer Candidate School, and was instituted as both of those programs were discontinued.

The Aviation Cadet Program was a combined precommissioning process and undergraduate flying training program to produce officers for flying duties. Originally created for the Army Air Corps in World War II, the Aviation Cadet Program was adopted by the US Air Force in 1947. Cadets were recruited from civilian life and the enlisted force. A very small number of officers were also selected to attend flying training with the cadets but were excluded from the officer training portion of the program. At first, prerequisites for aviation cadet applicants consisted primarily of medical and aptitudinal qualifications. As the complexity of Air Force aircraft increased, educational prerequisites became more defined to the point that some college level credit was required.³

Officer Candidate School (OCS) was the complementary program for officer accessions. OCS was basically a continuation of the primary Army officer production system of World War II. In the fledgling US Air Force, OCS was mainly a means of training selected members of the enlisted force to be officers. On occasion, small numbers of direct entries of civilians into OCS were allowed, but only to meet special and specific needs of the service. An Officer Training School (OTS) was begun in 1959 as a third commissioning organization, graduating 323 new second lieutenants in its first year. OTS was designed to train and commission college graduates only and was created in anticipation of more stringent educational prerequisites for all officer candidates. In 1962, the Chief of Staff, General Curtis LeMay, laid down the BA-level degree requirement for all incoming officers.⁴ As a result, the Air Force began to consolidate its commissioning functions under Officer Training School. OCS

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and the pilot cadet program were phased out in 1963; the navigator cadet program was ended the following year.

OTS production levels have fluctuated in response to Air Force needs. The relatively short leadtime of the program allows it to increase or reduce production levels, if necessary, with each class. During stable conditions, however, every attempt is made to maintain constant production levels to minimize the staff manning turbulence. OTS production peaked in 1967 at 7,894; the current programmed level is near 3,000 per year.⁵

Today, OTS and AFROTC both produce officers for all line officer career fields, but they are not duplicative. Each organization is necessary to obtain officers with diverse qualifications from as large a segment of the potential population as possible. AFROTC concentrates on the long leadtime acquisition of hard-to-get specialties. The AFROTC units are located on those campuses where these specialties are taught. Conversely, OTS is the commissioning avenue for officer aspirants who did not attend college where AFROTC was available or from the enlisted ranks. It is also the means to ensure that officer authorizations unfilled by AFROTC or the Air Force Academy are filled through the fastest and least expensive method.

US Air Force Academy

The desire for an institution to educate, train, and commission a core of career oriented officers for the Air Force was expressed in the earliest days of the Air Force. Less than 6 weeks after the establishment of an independent Department of the Air Force, a bill calling for an Air Force Academy was introduced in Congress.⁶ Despite the diversion caused by the Korean War, development of the academy was accelerated; and the first class was graduated in 1959.

The academy mission is "to provide instruction and experience to all cadets so that they graduate with the knowledge and character essential to leadership and the motivation to become career officers in the USAF."⁷ Production of the academy has slowly increased with expansion of the physical plant since the first class; it is currently stable at around 950 per year.⁸

Precommissioning Curriculum

No matter how impressive the physical plants or organizations for officer commissioning might be, the value and quality of the officers produced is directly dependent upon the quality of the training. Significant progress has been

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made in improving and refining the Air Force precommissioning curriculum, but there is still much to be done.

Prior to 1981, the curricula of the three line officer production institutions were developed and maintained independently. Furthermore, each of the functions responded to different governing hierarchies: USAFA as a separate operating agency under the Chief of Staff; OTS as a subordinate Air Training Command unit first under Lackland Technical Training Center and later directly under the ATC commander; and AFROTC under Air University. Air University was a separate major command until it was merged with ATC in 1978.⁹ This merger provided, for the first time, the organization and impetus for review and standardization of two of the three precommissioning functions. Once the effort began, the academy became a voluntary participant; and in 1981 a working agreement was reached on a core curriculum. A general statement of objectives, goals, and subject matter was issued under the title of the Precommissioning Education Memorandum of Understanding (PEMU), and procedures were established in an Air Force regulation for maintenance of the agreement.

The PEMU establishes four subject areas as the minimum core curriculum for precommissioning training: Air Force leadership and management, communication skills, professional knowledge, and defense studies.⁹ Each of the precommissioning organizations teaches the curriculum differently; but as a result of the PEMU, all new officers now get a common Air Force educational foundation. The agreement recognizes the differing capabilities and missions of the three organizations and provides for additional programs to complement the basic core curriculum.

Air Force Reserve Officer Training Corps Curriculum

Air Force ROTC has designed its curriculum to coincide with the normal college matriculation schedule. There are four major subject areas covered in classroom instruction, each spread over an academic year. The subjects, in order from the freshman to the senior year, are: The Air Force Today, The Development of Air Force Power, Air Force Management and Leadership, and National Security Forces in Contemporary American Society.¹⁰ Additionally, communications skills are infused through all 4 years as is the "leadership laboratory" where physical leadership exercises are conducted. AFROTC also requires participation in a 4-week (for 4-year cadets) or 6-week (for 2-year cadets) summer field training encampment prior to the junior academic year.

⁹The merger was dissolved in 1983, but AFROTC remained under ATC.

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The timing of the AFROTC courses is designed to encourage freshmen to enroll in order to expand the potential officer candidate population at each AFROTC detachment. Since ROTC is no longer mandatory on but a very few campuses (primarily the nonfederal military colleges), AFROTC must take the initiative in order to attract potentially qualified candidates. The first 2 years' curriculum is designed to present the Air Force to the students in an attractive and interesting manner and, concurrently, so that the detachment staff can observe and evaluate the officer potential of as large a pool of applicants as possible. Such "packaging" of the AFROTC program enhances its emphasis on quality and is in the best interests of the Air Force.

Officer Training School Curriculum

Officer Training School is the only one of the commissioning institutions with a "pure" training mission. The other two are deeply associated with an educational orientation. While the difference between education and training may be disputed, the clear-cut training function for OTS allows it to assume a more pragmatic approach to PEMU application. Each of the PEMU objectives is easily identified in the course descriptions for the program. OTS also adds a major study area in human relations.¹¹

The OTS environment contributes significantly to the curriculum. The intense 12-week program is conducted in a totally military atmosphere where every activity is a part of the officer training. While the "plebe system" atmosphere of former times no longer has a place in OTS, the course is still demanding and effective.

US Air Force Academy Professional Curriculum

Identification of the PEMU-related courses is most difficult in the USAFA curriculum. This is not because they are not taught; quite the contrary. Officer training and education are the mission of the academy. Coverage of the PEMU objectives is more expansive at USAFA than in either of the other two institutions. The PEMU core curriculum is totally integrated into the academy's 37 core curriculum courses as well as into the academy regimen itself. USAFA offers the greatest opportunity for expansion of the basic objectives provided for in the PEMU. This expansion is obvious in a wide variety of officer-related training programs offered only at the academy, such as the airmanship program, the basic cadet summer program, Operation Third Lieutenant, and so forth.¹²

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The academy, by design, represents the inculcation of officer training for the Air Force today. As discussed in the previous chapter, the 4-year program there is in itself a screening period.

In summary, all of the precommissioning organizations meet the objectives of the PEMU in their curriculum. However, the measure of effectiveness of officer training lies not in adherence to objectives or guidelines for course development, but rather in the quality of the product—the new second lieutenants entering the Air Force.

How Good Are the Lieutenants?

The programs through which we currently train and commission new officers for the Air Force are the result of years of trial, revision, and study. They are complex programs. Each facet of instruction is there for a purpose, and the experts vested with the responsibility for developing and constructing the curricula have been carefully selected for credentials and ability. The instructors selected to teach the material have been screened and trained for their tasks.

It would then seem that each graduate from these programs—the lieutenants—would be better prepared for Air Force life than their predecessors. That may in fact be true, but there are major indicators which deny that supposition.

Several programs instituted during the past 5 years seem designed to correct deficiencies in newly accessed officers. While the intent appears to be valid, the programs themselves have been created as active duty institutions without complementary alterations to the precommissioning programs which would solidify their effect. Some of these programs were mentioned briefly in the opening chapter, but their implications merit another short description here. They include: the Lieutenants' Professional Development Seminar conducted by the Leadership and Management Development Center, Project Warrior, the ATC officership curricula, changes to the Squadron Officer School eligibility criteria, and the creation of an SOS-like correspondence course.

The Lieutenants' Professional Development Seminar

The Lieutenants' Professional Development Seminar concentrates on occupational skills of lieutenants in supervisory positions. The primary implication of this course is not necessarily in the content but rather in the fact that the course was deemed necessary at all. It would seem to indicate vividly

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that the precommissioning training is inadequate in at least the single area of support officer administrative skills.

Project Warrior

Project Warrior is targeted to affect a broader spectrum of the Air Force than just newly commissioned officers. However, the apparent belief that a reorientation to the basic Air Force warfighting mission was necessary is an indictment of the effectiveness of both precommissioning training and basic military training. Somewhere, somehow, these two fundamental programs ceased to emphasize what we are all about or, more probably, we as an institution failed to recognize an emerging need for such an emphasis until now.

ATC Officer Qualities Enhancement Program

The directed reemphasis of officer quality training in Air Training Command starting in 1978 was the most overt indication that precommissioning education was not doing all it should to prepare new officers for active duty. These officer qualities initiatives, however, were not exclusively changes or additions to active duty programs such as the Undergraduate Flying Training or officer technical training syllabi. The initiatives also affected both OTS and AFROTC, and resulted in a major reorientation towards basic officer skills. Here the implications of a fragmented officer quality definition are profound: what factors to emphasize and how to emphasize them was left to each officer training organization to decide subjectively. While both OTS and AFROTC have enhanced and improved their programs as a result of the officer qualities initiatives, they could have done so more rapidly if the effort had been based upon a common definition of what the end product should be.

This is not to imply that officer training has not been emphasized continuously in ATC, especially in undergraduate flying training, throughout the years. Quite the contrary is true. However, the ATC history files and Air Force professional publications are also replete with articles on the reinfusion of officer quality-related training into ATC courses, especially undergraduate flying training.

Earlier SOS

The initiative to provide Squadron Officer School earlier in an officer's career is an additional indicator of inadequacies in the precommissioning education

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process. This proposal originally recommended that eligibility begin after 1 year's officer service, but that has been modified to a minimum of 2 years' service. Nonetheless, any perceived need to begin professional military education within the first 2 years of service is an inferential criticism of the quality of professional military education in the precommissioning curricula. Since the proposed revised criteria are not limited to graduates of any one commissioning source, we may conclude that the problem lies not in the commissioning organization but in the curricula.

Initial Career Orientation Program

Finally, there is an additional initiative to create a "fourth tier of professional military education" called the Initial Career Orientation Program, or ICOP.¹³ ICOP would be focused toward newly commissioned officers, specifically second lieutenants and direct accession officers. The program would be designed to orient the officer to his/her new assignment.

[ICOP] would be organized into three phases: supervisory counselling sessions, mandatory readings, and seminars. The supervisory sessions would . . . orient the officer to his/her new assignment. This would include the mission of the unit and how it fits into the overall mission of the wing/base/MAJCOM/Air Force. The supervisor would also discuss performance expectations, professional obligations and responsibilities, and the Air Force evaluation system.

The mandatory readings would focus on those areas which do not require supervisor or seminar time.

The seminars would be guided group discussions designed to explore relevant topics of professionalism, officership, ethics, etc.¹⁴

A perceived need to begin professional military education across the officer corps immediately after entry on active duty is further confirmation that the precommissioning curriculum is somehow missing the mark. Each ICOP objective correlates directly to objectives stated in the PEMU. One could, therefore, argue that officer candidates adequately prepared for active duty during precommissioning education would not need to repeat the same courses immediately after commissioning.

The Missing Factor

These active duty remedies for what appear to be precommissioning deficiencies suggest some serious questions.

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Can we do more to socialize the young men and women we bring into the officer corps? Are the curricula of our service academies appropriate or have they become so inclusive of various academic discipline that they have lost their focus on the profession of arms? Are cadets . . . now more concerned with majoring in a marketable academic discipline than with preparing themselves for a lifetime of service in the profession of arms? Is Officer Training School long enough and does it include enough indoctrination into the customs, courtesies, and traditions of the military profession? Do we demand enough of our ROTC training programs?¹⁵

This rhetorical quiz alludes to a missing factor in officer training—a factor which might have been overlooked or discarded in the design of precommissioning curriculum.

The missing factor is an emphasis on the officer ethos as the basis for a professional body instead of the current emphasis on mere membership in the Air Force. The current curriculum, especially in AFROTC and OTS, is replete with orientation to the Air Force, but there is no specific concentration from the perspective of the officer corps.

The most immediate rebuttal to this contention is that officership is an inherent characteristic and result of the entire precommissioning process. If this were true, however, there would be little or no need for the corrective programs outlined in this chapter.

While the difference between overt and implicit emphasis on officership may not first appear to be significant, it is to the difference between training officer candidates to be *in* the Air Force versus training them to be Air Force officers. More importantly, the emphasis on officership transforms the curricula from several varied courses related to officer duties to a cohesive study of what it means to be an officer. This synergism does not exist at the present. The Air Force Academy's 25th Anniversary Review Committee, in commenting on their concerns about the "total [USAFA] program," said:

With a relatively small student body, and a somewhat confined environment, we might expect that each faculty and staff person would have an excellent feel for the total program and for the ways in which the elements go together to create a consistent whole. Such did not appear to be the case.¹⁶

AFROTC does not have the advantage of the small student body or the confined environment of the academy. Their problem in synergizing the curriculum is therefore even more pronounced. For example, during the negotiations for the original Precommissioning Education Memorandum of Understanding, AFROTC expressed major concerns over the effect of the PEMU on the autonomy of each AFROTC unit. The concerns centered on establishing standards against which AFROTC instruction would have been evaluated.

Behavior terminology (know, understand, etc.) [should] be removed from the curriculum area goals since that connotes a standard level of learning which could be measured. That may signal to civilian institutions a loss of autonomy in influencing their AFROTC curriculum [emphasis added].¹⁷

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The rationale behind this concern for autonomy requires some explanation. ROTC units of all the services were the focal point for antimilitary activities on American campuses during the late sixties and early seventies. Attacks on the curriculum as academically inadequate were a legalistic manifestation of those activities. The Air Force need for officers with specific degrees through AFROTC mandated that AFROTC do whatever was necessary to remain on those campuses it considered essential. Compromise centered, in many cases, in meeting the academic accreditation standards of the host institution. At the least, the result was a temporary deemphasis of the overt military aspects of AFROTC. In extreme cases, such as at the University of California-Berkeley, the AFROTC curriculum was specifically redesigned to obtain acceptance.

Much of this has been reversed in recent years. To be sure, in the past few years, all precommissioning programs—and especially AFROTC—have vigorously reinstated the mission-first ethic into their programs. Unfortunately, the AFROTC concern for unit autonomy and institutional acceptance lingers.

In contrast, Officer Training School is penalized in curriculum cohesiveness by the brevity of the course. Since OTS is only 12 weeks long, there is little time to go very far beyond the essentials established by the PEMU. Therefore, any attempt to remedy PEMU deficiencies by adding to the existing subject areas means that OTS must either compress an already tight schedule or eliminate some aspect of the existing curriculum.

The solution to these problems is not to add subject areas to "fix" the curriculum, but to redesign the PEMU so that the central theme is the officer ethos rather than just membership in the Air Force.

Realigning the Focus

To realign the focus of precommissioning education to a concentration on an officer corps ethic, we must develop a new curriculum approach. Such an approach is outlined in the next section. Since the author is not an expert in curriculum design, the proposed plan may be flawed from a technical standpoint. However, it is the result of the author's year-long study of the Air Force officer corps, precommissioning systems, and accessions process, as well as 15 years' experience as a member of the officer corps.

The importance of this background and experience is an essential point. If a revised curriculum is in order, then the task of determining the content of that curriculum should not be assigned in toto to the instructional systems experts. While they are surely the correct agents to build the technical form of the curriculum, the intent and content must be carefully directed by the officer corps leadership. To do otherwise is analogous to having industry design and construct an aircraft without the mission needs elements. While we would end up with an airplane, it is questionable whether it would do what was required in combat.

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The success of such a program is contingent upon viewing the precommissioning curriculum as the foundation for future professional military education. There is no intent to represent the proposal as totally new or unique; many areas are contained in existing programs. The changes are in emphasis and tone to center the precommissioning process on the responsibilities and obligations of officership. The realignment recognizes the fact that precommissioning education is not intended to produce a fully qualified officer, but an entry-level officer who can be developed into a career professional.

The Proposed Curriculum

The proposed curriculum outlines seven basic areas of study. We have labeled them Officer Studies, Ethics of Officer Duty, The Junior Officer and Air Force Life, Warfare Studies, Officer Skills Development, Regional Studies, and The First Assignment. The areas of study are not presented in any special order of priority except for the final area. The priority determination should be left up to the operating agency. Some of the subject areas would also be applicable to the direct commissioning orientation courses, and those are so indicated.

Officer Studies

This course would be a fundamental introduction to the officer corps and would answer the question, "Why do we have officers?" It would include a history of the officer corps heritage from medieval times through today, and then focus on the Air Force officer corps. The course would introduce Air Force standards with a specific emphasis on officer standards and leadership by example. It should include a review of the regulatory guidance, including the nine sources alluded to in Chapter 2, along with Article 133, Uniform Code of Military Justice. The recently released Air Force guide on service roles and standards may be a collective source for many of these diverse publications; but in any case, this subject must be stressed from the officer point of view. The course in officer studies would provide a grounding in customs, courtesies, protocol, and so forth. The approach should be pragmatic rather than abstract in explaining what is expected of every Air Force officer, and it would be applicable to direct commissioning orientation programs.

A text would have to be developed for such a course since no such consolidated guidance exists. However, such a text would be useful far beyond precommissioning education as a reference document. Such information

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continues to be available through commercial publications such as the *Air Force Officer's Guide*, but that source is neither obligatory or necessarily reliable since it is not subject to Air Force review or approval. More importantly, it has provided such inaccurate information as the guidance on when ribbons may be worn. "Air Force men," the 1981 edition states, "can exercise their own option as to whether or not to wear ribbons on the short-sleeved shirts (tan uniform)[sic]." The Air Force has not had a "tan uniform" since the early seventies.¹⁸

The Ethics of Officer Duty

The complexity of ethics requires that this course be divided into three main areas.

First, the study would begin with an in-depth introduction to the oath of office and the commissioning document's wording and implications.

Second, it would provide an introduction to military ethics. Gabriel provides his curriculum for the instruction of military ethics in *To Serve With Honor*, but it is predicated entirely on the adoption of a code of officer ethics. Such a code, for any of the services, would indeed provide the heart of a study of ethics at any level. With or without a code of ethics, the study of ethics is essential. This course could be built around such publications as Gabriel's and others referenced in this monograph. Following the introduction to conceptual military ethics, there would be military ethics case studies.

Finally, the ethics study would include a review of the professional aspects of officer membership. This area would include an emphasis on the differences between civilian and military officer life as related to the voluntary relinquishment of certain prerogatives and liberties. Such subjects as the Code of Conduct, conflict of interest, political affiliations and activities, and the 24-hour duty ethic should be introduced and developed. Again, this course would be applicable to direct commissioning programs.

The text for this course could either be constructed from collected readings or based around existing works on the subject by such noted authorities as Richard Gabriel, General S. L. A. Marshall, General Maxwell Taylor, and so forth.

The Junior Officer and Air Force Life

This course would cover the real life aspects of being an Air Force junior officer. The subject matter would range from informal courtesies and traditions

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to professional obligations, and would encompass relationships with seniors, peers, and subordinates. Fraternization implications (officer-NCO and officer-enlisted) would be taught here. Professional obligations, such as officers' club membership, Combined Federal Campaign participation, and so forth, would be introduced in their proper perspective in this area. The course could also encompass personal and financial planning and estate management. In short, this curriculum area should offer an insight into the practical implications of active duty and personal involvement in the Air Force. The value for direct commissioning programs is debatable.

Warfare Studies

The value of the study of history for professional officers is unquestionable. The intent of this course is to provide a grounding in that subject matter which would be developed later through professional readings and PME. The potential for this course is limited only by time constraints; it should be the longest of the curriculum studies.

As a minimum, this area should introduce aerial warfare as an evolution of technology and conflict. It must include an Air Force history, but also introduce the great strategists (Clausewitz, et al.). (It seems inappropriate that our PME programs wait until the Air War College to teach Clausewitz—he should be introduced in precommissioning education.) Airpower, as applied in World War I and subsequently, should also be included.

Texts for this area are abundant and should be selected as a nucleus for a continuing professional reading program for the officer candidate. These texts provide not only the historical exploits on Air Force leaders, but some, such as Copp's *A Few Great Captains*,¹⁹ reveal roles junior officers have played in the evolution of the Air Force—an essential element in making this course effective.

Officer Skills Development

This course should teach the functional skills required of junior officers. It would include leadership studies and an introduction to management skills. The current management text for AFROTC is a commercially produced industrial management textbook. The concepts and depth of the material therein would support the conclusion that we overteach management, at least in AFROTC. This course would be designed to introduce leadership and management as occupational skills. The full development of these skills must occur later,

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especially since most newly accessed officers are several years away from employing these skills (see Chapter 2).

Another aspect of officer skills development would be counseling and human behavior. The intent would be to orient new officers to this area, not to qualify every officer as a professional counselor. While human behavior and counseling techniques would be included, they should be balanced with information on the professional services in this area available in the Air Force.

Officer skills would also introduce Air Force communication techniques. *Tongue and Quill* is the accepted active duty writing guide; precommissioning education is an appropriate point to introduce it. The basic book, along with an exercise workbook, would seem to be sufficient texts. Oral communication, such as briefings and presentations, should continue to be infused throughout the program as is presently done.

Finally, the skills development curriculum should enlighten the officer candidate on the role of the commander and the junior officer's responsibilities as a member of the commander's staff. Chain of command, professional loyalty, privileged communication, and so forth would come under this topic.

Regional Studies

This topic area should include a thumbnail review of the major areas of the world presented in much the same manner as in the Air Command and Staff College curriculum. It should center on the political, military, and economic strengths of the major world players, and conclude with an in-depth introduction to the threat—the Soviet Union. Such a plan would provide a basis for future updates on the threat and begin to infuse the mission orientation sought through Project Warrior.

Targeted Curriculum: The First Assignment

This course must obviously be presented as close as possible to the commissioning date. It should begin with an overall outline of the Air Force structure and organization, major Air Force installations, and a description of Air Force weapon systems. Following that, the candidates should be tasked to research their known or most probable initial active duty assignment in as much detail as possible. They would then brief the class on their anticipated job and organization, with special emphasis on the mission.

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Such an ambitious program obviously requires support from both the Air Force Manpower and Personnel Center, in making assignments known at an early date, and the operating commands, in providing information to the precommissioning agencies. Both aspects are certainly within the realm of practicality.

Overall Intent

This proposed curriculum has several obvious flaws. It ranges from the very general to the specific, from educational matters to finite training. The preservation of the suggested content is not important; as stated earlier, the content must be reviewed and approved by the senior leadership. However, retaining the intent is crucial.

Each of the suggested subject areas is presented as it relates to the officer rather than as informational or educational material. All of the subjects are covered in the existing curricula except for the officer studies area, but the apparent emphasis is on the subject rather than the utility of the subject to the officer.

The People Who Teach

Even with a revised curriculum, the crux and pivot point of success or failure in the precommissioning programs rests with the officers who present the material. This is especially true for AFROTC where the decentralized operation multiplies the need for quality control. The newly commissioned officers can hardly be expected to initially reflect a set of values or standards different from those of their teachers. Therefore, the Air Force should seriously consider a system wherein precommissioning duty is emphasized, recognized, and rewarded appropriately. Careful selection of high-quality officers for this duty, and *professional recognition of its value*, will attract other top performers. Professional recognition, in the form of quality follow-on assignments and promotion board education on the value of such duty, is the singular means of ensuring a quality precommissioning staff.

AFROTC-Host Institution Relationships

With regard to the special situation involving AFROTC's relationship to its host institutions, it would appear that a crucial decision is at hand if substantive

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changes are to be made to improve officer quality. Once the essentials of an improved program are determined, we cannot afford, for the sake of the officer corps, to dilute those essentials because of academic myopia or political viewpoints in the host institutions. If an institution is unable to accept what we consider essential, then perhaps it would be best for AFROTC to withdraw from that campus.

This is a propitious time for such a stand. AFROTC presence on a campus is a significant fiscal benefit to both the institution and the community. The AFROTC scholarship program provides a direct input into the university or college, and the indirect input of staff salary and employment opportunities for civilians supports both the community and the institution. Only the largest schools can afford to ignore these facts. For those reasons, it is unlikely that a well-constructed curriculum which emphasizes officer education would be challenged. The fact is that the curriculum is rarely, if ever, challenged now.

The underlying argument for retaining the current curriculum is its educational emphasis as opposed to the training implications of the suggested plan. Whereas USAFA submerges officer training within its primary education objectives, OTS is predominately a training function. AFROTC is perceived to operate between these two extremes, but its mission is fundamentally the same as OTS's. The fact is that AFROTC is basically a recruiting and training function. We cannot presume to supersede the educational responsibilities of the host institution, but we can supplement the educational aspects with quality training designed to produce professional military officers.

Summary

The issues surrounding precommissioning education can be reduced to a single concern—the means to produce the best possible new officer for the Air Force. As documented, there are strong indications that the current curriculum falls short of providing the basics. The suggested changes may fall short also, but they are a step in the right direction. This direction is towards a focus on preserving the officer elan as a way of life.

Because there is so much at stake, the services cannot depend solely upon such influence as may be exerted on their affairs by the occasional idealist, but must work for that chain reaction that comes of making the inculcation of military ideals one of the cardinal points of a strong, uniting, inner doctrine.²⁰

NOTES

CHAPTER 4

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CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY AND OBSERVATIONS

This monograph recommends that the Air Force (1) formulate a code of ethics for officers, (2) dictate a set of minimum standards for potential officer recruits, and (3) realign/reestablish the precommissioning core curriculum, all to the end of producing "quality" and brotherhood in Air Force officers through shared knowledge, experience, and dedication, despite the differences in their jobs. →

Huntington traces the American military tradition to three roots. The first, popularism, emphasized the soldier-citizen concept. The second, technicism, stressed the need for a highly technical cadre around which an army could be built in a national emergency. The third root, professionalism, centered on a standing force of career soldiers.¹ In turn, these three schools of thought have dominated the American officer corps, influencing both the criteria for professional credibility and the qualifications required for admission into the profession. From the end of the Civil War through the end of World War II, the three continued to vie for preeminence in the officer corps. For most of the 20th century, it appears that the three functioned in harmony to describe the ideal officer as one with a balance of concern for all factors. Now, rather than heed the hard-learned lessons which led to that balance, we appear to have opted again for technicism as the dominant factor.

This final chapter briefly reviews our examination of current officer accession practices, programs, and trends, and it offers some observations about the future implications for the officer corps.

Chapter Summaries

Chapter 1 examines the dynamic nature of the officer corps. The evidence indicates that the officer corps is at a critical point in a shift from a corps of generalists to an increasing emphasis on specialization. The criticality of this shift is enhanced by the impending loss of the remaining officer combat experience. The rationale for the transition from generalists to specialists is diffuse and complex; it involves the aftereffects of the Vietnam War, the end of

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conscription, the changing nature of American society, and the pace of weapons technology. Chapter 1 highlights the degree to which those factors affect the officer corps and creates the need to reexamine the criteria for officer prerequisites.

Chapter 2 investigates the credentials of the Air Force officer. It discusses the diverse influences which have formed the character and complexion of the Air Force officer today. This chapter advocates greater attention in officer production to the unquantifiable aspects of officer credentials—the character and personality aspects of quality. The chapter cautions against the dominance of concern for aptitude and occupational skills in the officer corps at the expense of other unarticulated qualities. The author then suggests a methodology for articulating those qualities in the form of a code of officer duty ethics.

Chapter 3 examines officer candidate prerequisites and the definitions of quality as applied in the recruiting and screening activities of the three line officer production agencies. It identifies several factors which exacerbate the already limited emphasis on character factors in officer recruiting and screening. The chapter concludes with suggestions to balance the concern for technical expertise with equal concern for character qualities. The chapter recommends continued research into the potential of personality/character testing as a means to quantify those aspects of quality, and it strongly recommends reinstituting board interviews for OTS and AFROTC officer candidates.

Chapter 4 analyzes the precommissioning education curriculum, not through a detailed evaluation of the specific course content and methodology but by an examination of the basis for the core curriculum: the Precommissioning Education Memorandum of Understanding. The chapter compares the application of the PEMU to each of the line officer training functions, then highlights indicators of weaknesses in the curriculum base. Those indicators are programs aimed at educating or reeducating new officers on active duty. Chapter 4 concludes with a proposed plan for reorienting the PEMU to focus the concern and emphasis of all precommissioning curricula on the officer ethos as a means to reduce PEMU weaknesses.

The Need for Accessions Strategy

The implications of this study support the formulation of a specific strategy for officer accessions which goes beyond the consideration of short-term needs of the Air Force for officers to fill specific occupational billets. There is an apparent deficiency in this area in planning for the officer corps. Since the end of World War II and the advent of atomic weapons, many people have come to believe technology has obviated preatomic concepts of warfare. Such a belief is graphically indicated in Air Force officer accessions. Since the mid-1960s, we

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have continually increased the demands for technical competence in order to stay ahead of the competition in weapons development. Unfortunately, the concern for the expertise to develop the strategies and doctrines to accompany new weapons has not been as emphatic and, therefore, is not reflected in officer production objectives. It could well be that the need for technical expertise is acute and current, whereas the need for strategists and visionaries is not as acute or contemporary—yet.

Author's Observations and Conclusions

The research and study during this project have led the author to form certain conclusions about the need for changes and the effects of failing to address those needs. The following presents the author's opinions concerning the effect of continuing the current accessions practices and programs without addressing the issues presented in the study.

Diminishing Strategic Influence

Without specific actions on the part of the Air Force to establish an accession strategy which addresses the need for balanced expertise, we will continue the present emphases in accessions. Today's accession planning is responding to today's needs. The demands for certain specialists are real and defendable—there is no argument against that real need. There is argument that the fascination with occupational qualifications in general, and technical qualifications specifically, without an appreciation of the long-range requirements of the officer corps for professional strategists and conceptualists, is not in the best interest of the Air Force. We must achieve a balance in satisfying both the short-term shortages in engineers and scientists and the long-term need to prepare the Air Force's future visionaries.

The counter to this argument is that we can educate the professional strategists, visionaries, and conceptual thinkers from within the ranks through PME and on-the-job exposure. While this could be possible, it does not seem to be any more desirable than accessing strategists and attempting to make them engineers through the same process. We need engineers and scientists disciplined in engineering and science; we also need abstract thinkers schooled in the art and history of warfare, the social sciences, and the humanities to balance the formulation of a defense policy to apply the weaponry developed by the engineers and scientists. This is not to imply that those officers educated in

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scientific and engineering disciplines cannot or do not become abstract thinkers, conceptualists, and strategists. They should and do. However, the Air Force is rapidly compartmentalizing those disciplines into specialty communities which inhibit that evolution. We cannot afford to ignore the long-term need for balance in expertise and devote all the accessions quotas to one area or the other in order to correct short-term problems. It may be more desirable in systems acquisition to cut entire programs to meet fiscal restrictions rather than scale down across the board, but such a practice in officer accessions management creates a vacuum in the officer corps which portends danger for the future.

This is not to imply that a conscious decision has been made to forsake nontechnical accessions to achieve technical needs. There are no indications that such intent exists. What appears to have occurred is that the appreciation for the need for nontechnical expertise has been obscured by the perceptions of critical shortages in technical expertise.

An officer corps balanced in expertise between both the science and the art of war is more capable of dealing with the total spectrum of armed conflict, not just with the weaponry.

I would argue with you . . . that there are four layers of conflict that are hierarchical. That the top of the hierarchy is vision, the second is strategy, the third is operations, and the fourth is tactics. And that over time they dominate based on that hierarchy. [It is] a reality, it's something . . . like the Mexicans who fought at the Alamo versus the Mexicans who fought at San Jacinto when nobody who fought at the Alamo lost the War for Texas Independence, but the Mexican Army lost that war. And it is in that framework . . . that North Vietnamese had vision and strategy; we had operations and tactics.²

Continuing Polarization

While we cannot predict the future with any degree of certainty, we can logically project the effects of continuing the present trends in officer accession philosophy from the changes we have already seen in the officer corps in the past two decades. The trends were discussed at length in the first four chapters of this study, but they were discussed in the context of their effect on today's officer force. What are the future implications of today's accession practices?

Without a specific strategy to address the need for balanced expertise in accessions, we should expect the polarization of the officer corps to continue. Bonen, Daskavich and Nofzinger, Wood, Drew, and Baucom all note the eroding sense of corporateness in their observations of the contemporary officer corps. One could conclude from their presentations that the erosion is a result, either directly or indirectly, of the increasing identity of officers with their skills rather than with the military profession.

At the least, polarization of the officer corps into small groups of experts united only by a common employer will adversely affect the preservation of a professional ethic. This concern has become especially prevalent already,

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especially in the PME curriculum, over the past decade. Coincidentally, that decade has been the most marked by our increasing corporate concern for technical expertise.

Today's peacetime Air Force is a large, incredibly complex organization with an officer corps of 99,000. These officers are divided among 217 different occupational specialties that are themselves based upon 60 different academic disciplines.

Given this diversity, it is not surprising that three recent studies present evidence indicating a weakness in the unity and sense of purpose of the officer corps. Captain Frank Wood reported in 1980 that younger officers think service in the support areas is more rewarding and has greater prestige than service in operational portions of the Air Force. More recent reports on officer professionalism by Major C. Anne Bonen and Captain James H. Slagle indicate that substantially more than half of the officers in today's Air Force identify more closely with their career fields than with the officer corps.³

At the worst, a failure to ensure that we maintain a balance between expertise in both the art *and* science of warfare could result in the reduced ability of the Air Force to make meaningful strategic inputs into the formulation of national policy. Certainly the leaders of the future will be selected from the brightest and most capable of the officer corps, and they will possess the ability to conceptualize both on the strategic and operational levels. The potential for reduced capability would result from the effect of limited staff support—staffs manned primarily with experts in weaponry and lacking in experts on warfare.

Most probably, the results of failing to specifically address a balance of technical and nontechnical expertise for the officer corps in accessions will be between the extremes described. When significant disparities are recognized, the emphasis in officer procurement is shifted to relieve them, as we have seen in engineer recruiting. The problem in that approach is that such crisis management precipitates ensuing deficiencies in other areas—just as we are now approaching in nontechnical expertise. A coherent, planned strategy to get well and stay well in both areas of expertise is the means to break free from the action-reaction-overreaction cycle.

The long-term implications of polarization can range from minor to extreme depending upon the corrective actions employed by the Air Force to combat the tendency. Again, initiatives to correct the perceptions of eroding professional identity must be carefully structured so that they address the disease rather than merely treat symptoms.

Conclusion

This monograph deals with the issue of officer quality. It has centered on the officer accession system since that is obviously the first point of control for quality. The monograph should not be taken as a criticism of the officer procurement system. If the arguments for improved quality presented in the monograph are valid, it should be apparent that the need for changes results from

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relatively recent requirements and not from inefficiencies or culpability in the current or past systems to recruit and train officers. The issues surrounding "officer quality" have implications far beyond the organization and mission statements of the units tasked to recruit, train, and produce new officers for the Air Force.

- ✓ The organizations and management for officer production are adequately structured, well managed, and sufficiently dynamic to meet any foreseeable need. The current initiatives of the major line officer production organizations (USAFA, AFROTC, and OTS) to refine, consolidate, and coordinate the officer production process will continue to improve that capability. The major issue of officer quality addressed in this analysis is not centered on just more clearly defined parameters for selection of candidates or adjustments to the curriculum.
- ✓ Those aspects, although traditionally addressed when "quality" has been a concern, will necessarily respond to fiscal influence and technological developments. The crux of officer quality considerations rests in the definition of quality itself and a cohesive strategy for officer practices and programs for officer candidate selection, screening, and education. We have become mesmerized by empirical data. If you can support your position with quantifiable information, your chances for success are significantly improved. It could easily be argued that we consider the accuracy and validity of an argument to be a direct function of supporting data. As a result, we have come to trust our visceral perceptions and intuitive abilities less and less.

Unfortunately, the major quantifiable factors in officer accessions do not include data on character quality in the candidates. Quality of character is the most difficult to define and quantify, yet it is the most significant factor to consider if we are to go beyond purely educational criteria. The goal to quantify character quality is a most difficult objective—but well worth the investment in the long run.

The task is to produce officers who will recognize the serious implications of the profession of arms. The Air Force officer corps as a profession is in a state of change due to many influences, but the fundamental obligations of the profession remain constant. If officership qualities are not championed and emphasized as the basic requirements for membership in the officer corps, then other characteristics will continue to emerge as fundamental credentials for membership. While these other credentials might well suffice in peacetime, they will not be adequate in war. The awesome and horrible destructive capabilities of our weaponry and the speed with which future conflicts will be fought demand that the officers who direct and apply the weapons operate from a common professional and ethical base.

The officer's sense of patriotism, discipline, and self-sacrifice must be no cosmos incoherent shape, but clear and vital so that its lambent flame may distill that most vital of all his attributes—a sense of OBLIGATION [which] is inseparably connected with discipline. We must make officers so proud of their calling that the fear of disgracing their cloth shall be more potent than that of the animal shrinking from imminent dissolution.⁴

NOTES

CHAPTER 5

1. Samuel P. Huntington, *The Soldier and the State* (Cambridge, Mass.: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1957), pp. 193-221.
2. Speech by Congressman Newton Gingrich to Air Force Long Range Planning Conference, Maxwell AFB, Alabama, 11 April 1983.
3. Donald R. Baucom, Lt Col, USAF, "The Air Force Officer in the 80s: Receding Professionalism," unpublished essay, Maxwell AFB, Alabama, 1982 (typewritten), p. 1.
4. Martin Blumenson, *The Patton Papers, 1885-1940* (Boston, Mass.: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1972), pp. 674-675.

GLOSSARY

A

ACTAmerican College Test
ACSCAir Command and Staff College
AFMPCAir Force Military Personnel Center
AFOQTAir Force Officer Qualification Test
AFROTCAir Force Reserve Officer Training Corps
ARIAirpower Research Institute
ASTRAAir Staff Training
ATCAir Training Command
AVFall volunteer force
AWCAir War College

D

DODDepartment of Defense

I

ICOPInitial Career Orientation Program
IRIIdentity Research Institute

L

LMDCLeadership and Management Development Center

O

OCSOfficer Candidate School
OTSOfficer Training School

P

PEMUPrecommissioning Education Memorandum of Understanding
PMEprofessional military education

Q

QISQuality Index Score

R

RAFRoyal Air Force

S

SATScholastic Aptitude Test
SOS.....Squadron Officer School

U

USAF.....United States Air Force
USAFAUnited States Air Force Academy
USAFRSUnited States Air Force Recruiting Service
USMA.....United States Military Academy

W

WPSSWeighted Professional Officer Course Selection System

